

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

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BLACK SHEEP!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LAND AT LAST," "KISSING THE ROD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XII. THE FALLING OF THE SWORD.

STEWART ROUTH left his house in Mayfair at an early hour on the day following that which had witnessed the eccentric proceedings and subsequent resolution of Jim Swain. Things were prospering with him; and the vague dread which had fallen upon him had been dissipated. Hope and defiance divided his mind between them. His speculations were all doing well; there was money to be had—money easy to be realised, on which he could lay his hand at very short notice, and there was triumphant, successful love. So much had hope to feed on—assuredly no insufficient aliment. Defiance reared itself against Fate. The time was drawing near, approaching with fearfully rapid strides, when the contingency, long contemplated, successfully eluded for a period beyond his expectation, kept off by such unlikely accidents and combinations as might almost have justified his daring faith in his luck, but recognised of late as inevitable, must be realised, when the identity of the murdered man must be known, and the perilous investigation must begin. So be it, he was ready to meet the danger if it must be met; but he hoped no such necessity would arise. His influence over the beautiful woman whom he now really loved with all the passion he had at first feigned was becoming every day stronger and more complete. He knew that the strength of his nature had subdued her; she had no pride, she had only vanity; and Stewart Routh made the mistake to which selfish and interested natures are prone. He forgot to calculate upon the influence of selfishness and calculation when their employ must necessarily be in opposition to him. His egotism injured the balance of his intellect, and now he had not the aid of Harriet's calm, cool, unerring judgment in his scheme to restore that balance. His position with regard to Harriet was the most troublesome topic of his thoughts just now. He tried to forget it often, but he did not succeed; not that any sentimental obstacle to the most complete

oblivion presented itself. Routh never bestowed a backward glance upon the life of self-sacrifice and devotion to him, of fidelity which, however depraved in its manifestations, was still fidelity, fond and true as the best man who ever lived an honest and virtuous life in the face of heaven and earth might be proud to inspire, which had been that of the woman whom he had deliberately betrayed, and was now prepared deliberately to abandon. He would have sneered at such a suggestion as a contemptible weakness. Harriet had been undeniably useful to him. He did not attempt to deny the fact to himself; but circumstances had arisen which prevented his making use of her in the future, and consequently, as this instrument was unfortunately living, intelligent, peculiarly acute, and animated by one of the strongest of human passions, it had become dangerous. Harriet had been agreeable to him too—it has been said that he had loved her after his fashion; but this had been all over months ago; and the dearest of all mortal things, to a man of Stewart Routh's stamp, is a dead love; it has not even the dreary faculty of ghostliness—it cannot haunt. The uncomplaining, active, hard-working, inventive, untiring comrade, the passionately loving wife, the shrewd, unscrupulous, undaunted, steel-nerved colleague, was nothing more to him now than a dangerously sharp-witted, suspicious woman, who knew a great deal too much about him, and was desperately in his way. The exhilaration of his spirits and the partial intoxication of his new passion had done away with the fear of Harriet which had taken possession of him, but they had intensified his dislike, and one thought presented itself with peculiar distinctness to Stewart Routh as he went Citywards that morning. It was:

"If it was only to get out of her sight, to be rid of her for ever, what a relief it would be."

He had been at some pains to keep up appearance with his wife since their return to London. To the step which he meditated a quarrel with her was in no way necessary; and in the event of his failing to bring his plans to maturity before the inevitable discovery, it was all important that they should be agreed on the line of action to be taken. Harriet could not, indeed, oppose him successfully in his determination, if the occasion should arise, to

throw the charge of the murder upon George Dallas; but she might render his position extremely perilous if she did not second him. What reason had he to fear? The estrangement between them had been growing wider, it was true, but it had not been exclusively of his making; she had held aloof from him as much as he from her, and he acknowledged that, if no infidelity had existed upon his part, it would still have taken place. From the moment they ceased to be comrades in expedients, and became accomplices in crime, the consequences made themselves felt. Routh did not believe in blessings or in curses, but he did not dispute the inevitable result of two persons finding out the full extent of each other's wickedness? that, those two persons, if obliged to live together, will find it rather uncomfortable. The worst accomplice a man can have is his wife, he had often thought; women always have some scruple lurking somewhere about them, a hankering after the ideal, for the possibility of respecting a man in some degree. When he had been forced to see and to believe in the intensity of his wife's silent sufferings, it had occurred to him more than once to think, "she would not be so miserable if she had done it herself; she would have been much jollier. Nothing ever will cure some women of sentiment."

Did it ever occur to him that it had not been worth his while to do what he had done? that, on the whole, it had not paid? No, never. Routh had been angry with Harriet when the matter had been brought up between them, had complained that it was always "cropping up;" but the truth was, he thought of it himself, much more frequently than it was impressed on him by any allusion from without; and he never ceased to remind himself that the deed had been necessary, indispensable. It had brought him money, when money must have been had, or all must have ended for him; it had brought him money when money meant a clearing and brightening of his sky, an utter change in his life, the cessation of a hazardous and ignoble warfare, the restoration to a peaceful and comparatively safe career. He was in a difficult position now, it was true—a position in which there was peril to be surmounted only by dauntlessness, prudence, and coolness; but he was dauntless, prudent, and cool. Had all this never been, what might have been his position? When Deane and he had met, his luck had been almost at its lowest; and, in the comradeship which had ensued, there had always been burning anger and intense humiliation on Routh's part, and cold, sneering, heartless, boasting on Deane's. Routh was the cleverer man of the two, and incomparably the greater villain; but Deane had elements of rascality in him which even Routh had felt himself entitled to despise. And he had hated him. Routh, in his cool manner of thinking things over, had not failed to take this feeling into due account. He would not have killed Deane only because he hated him; he was too true to his principles to

incur so tremendous a risk for the simple gratification of even the worst sentiment, of even sentiment intensified into a passion, but he allowed it sufficient weight and influence effectually to bar the entrance of a regret when the larger object had also been attained. He had no pity for his victim, not even the physical sensation which is experienced by men whose organisation and associations are not of the brutal kind, when temper, circumstances, or sudden temptation have impelled them to deeds of cruelty; he had hated Deane too much for that. He never thought of the crime he had committed without dwelling on the conduct which had made him resolve upon it. How the man had played with his necessities, had tricked him with compromising confidences, had duped him with false promises, had led him to the very brink of the abyss, and there had struggled with him—with him, a desperate man! Fool—fool! one must go over the brink, then; and who should it be but the weaker? who should hold his ground but the stronger—but he who had everything to gain? He thought over all those things again to-day, methodically, arranging the circumstances as they had occurred in his mind. He recalled the hours of suspense through which he had lived on that day when Deane had promised to bring him a sum of money, representing his own interest in the mining company, which sum was to secure to Routh the position he had striven hard to attain, and rescue him from the consequences of a fraudulent transfer of shares which he had already effected. It had come to a question of hours, and the impatience and suspense had almost worn out Routh's strong nerves, almost deprived him of his self-command. How well he remembered it; how he lived through all that time again. It had never been so vivid in his remembrance, with all the vitality of hate and anger, often as he had thought of it, as it was to-day.

The heartless trifling, the petty insolence of the rich rascal, who little guessed the strength and resolution, the daring and desperation, of the greater, if worse, villain, came back as freshly to Stewart Routh's vindictive memory as if he had not had his ghastly revenge and his miserable triumph months ago, as if he had suffered and winced under them but yesterday. And that yesterday! What a glorious day in his life it had been! Presently he would think about that, and nothing but that; but now he must pursue his task of memory to the end. For he was not his own master in this. Once set to thinking of it, to living it all over again, he had no power to abridge the history.

He had to remember the hours during which he had waited for Deane's coming, for the payment of the promised money; he had to remember how they waned, and left him sick with disappointment, maddened with apprehension; how he had determined he would keep the second appointment with Deane; he did not fear his failing in that, because it was for his own pleasure; and then, for the first time in his

life, had felt physically unable to endure suspense, to keep up appearances. He had to remember how he had shrunk from the coarse insolence with which he knew Deane would sport with his fears and his suspense in the presence of George Dallas, unconscious of their mutual position; how all-important it was that, until he had wrung from Deane the promised money, he should keep his temper. He had to remember how the idea that the man who had so far broken faith with him already, and might break faith with him altogether, and so ruin him utterly (for if he had failed then, and been detected, hope would have been at an end for him), was within a few yards of him, perhaps with the promised money in his pocket at that moment, had occurred to him with a strange fascination. How it had intensified his hatred of Deane; how it had deepened his sense of his own degradation; how it had made him rebel against and curse his own poverty, and filled his heart with malediction on the rich man who owned that money which meant safety and success to him. He had to remember how Deane had given no answer to his note, temperately worded and reasonable (Harriet had kept to the letter of the truth in what she had said of it to George Dallas), but had left him to all the tortures of suspense. He had to remember how the desire to know whether Deane really had had all day in his possession the money he had promised him, and had kept him expecting, grew imperative, implacable, irresistible; how he had hung about the tavern, had discovered by Deane's boasting words to his companion that he had guessed aright, had followed them, determined to have an answer from Deane. He had to remember how he strove with anger, with some remnants of his former pride, which tortured him with savage longings for revenge, while he waited about in the parlours of the billiard-rooms whither Deane and Dallas had gone. He remembered how lonely and blank, how quiet and dreary, the street had become by the time the two came out of the house together and parted, in his hearing, with some careless words. He had to remember how he confronted Deane, and was greeted with a taunt; how he had borne it; how the man had played with his suspense, and ostentatiously displayed the money which the other had vainly watched and waited for all day; and then, suddenly assuming an air of friendliness and confidence, had led him away Citywards, without betraying his place of residence, questioning him about George Dallas. He had to remember how this had embittered and intensified his anger, and how a sudden fear had sprung up in his mind that Deane had confided to Dallas the promises he had made to him, and the extent to which their "business" relations had gone. A dexterous question or two had relieved this apprehension, and then he had once more turned the conversation on the subject in which he was so vitally interested. He had to remember—and how vividly he did remember, with what an awakening of the

savage fury it had called into life, how Deane had met this fresh attempt—with what a cool and tranquil assertion that he had changed his mind, had no further intention of doing any business in Ruth's line—was going out of town, indeed, on the morrow, to visit some relations in the country, too long neglected, and had no notion when they should meet again.

And then—then Stewart Routh had to remember how he had killed the man who had taunted, deceived, treated him cruelly; how he had killed him, and robbed him, and gone home and told his wife—his comrade, his colleague, his dauntless, unscrupulous Harriet. He had to remember more than all this, and he hated to remember it. But the obligation was upon him; he could not forget how she had acted, after the first agony had passed over, the first penalty inflicted by her physical weakness, which she had spurned and striven against. So surely as his memory was forced to reproduce all that had gone before, it was condemned to revive all that had come after. But he did not soften towards her that day, no, not in the least, though never had his recollection been so detailed, so minute, so calm. No, he hated her. She wearied him; she had ceased to be of any service to him; she was a constant torment to him. So he came back to the idea with which his reflections had commenced, and, as he entered on the perusal of the mass of papers which awaited his attention in his "chambers" in Tokenhouse-square—for he shared the business-abode of the invisible Flinders now—he repeated:

"What a relief it would be to get away from her for ever!"

Only a few days now, and the end must come. He was a brave man in his evil way, and he made his calculations coolly, and scanned his criminal combinations without any foolish excess of confidence, but with well-grounded expectation. For a little longer it would not be difficult to keep on fair terms with Harriet, especially as she had renewed her solitary mode of life, and he had taken the precaution of pretending to a revived devotion to play, since the auspicious occasion on which he had won so largely at Homburg. Thus his absence from home was accounted for, and as she had not the slightest suspicion that Mrs. P. Ireton Bembridge was in London, had never displayed the least jealousy, except on the one occasion when he had shown her the locket, and had unhesitatingly accepted his explanation of their sudden return to England; he had no reason to trouble himself about her. To sedulously avoid exciting her suspicion and jealousy now, and, when the proper time should arrive, to confirm the one and arouse the other so effectually by desertion, infidelity, and insult, as to drive her at once to free herself from him by the aid of the law—this was his scheme. It looked well; he knew Harriet, he thought, thoroughly, and he might safely calculate upon the course she would adopt. It was strange, if human incon-

sistency can ever be strange, that Stewart Routh, a man of eminently vindictive disposition, entirely forgot to take into account that the woman thus desperately injured might also seek her revenge, which would consist in declining to take her own freedom at the price of giving him his.

Perhaps if the depths of that dark heart had been sounded, the depths beyond its own consciousness—the unvisited, unquestioned, profound—it would have been discovered that this man was so entirely accustomed to the devotion of the woman who loved him with a desperate, though intelligent love, that even in her utmost despair and extreme outrage of wrong he felt assured she would do that which it was his will she should do.

During all this mental review he had hardly bestowed a thought on George Dallas. He would be safe enough in the end, if the worst came to the worst. It had suited him to magnify the strength of the chain of coincidences, which looked like evidence, in discussing them with George, and he had magnified it; it suited him to diminish that strength in discussing them with himself, and he diminished it. A good deal of suffering and disgrace to all the "Felton-Dallas-Carruthers connexion," as he insolently phrased it in his thoughts, must come to pass, of course, but no real danger. And if it were not so? Well, in that case, he really could not afford to care. When he had wanted money, Deane (he still thought of him by that name) had had to give way to that imperative need. Now he wanted safety, and Dallas must pay its price. There was something of the sublime of evil in this man's sovereign egotism. As he turned his mind away from the path it had been forced to tread to the end, he thought, "there is a touch of the whimsical in everything; in this it is the demi-semi-relationship between Harriet and these people. I suppose the sensitive lady of Poynings never heard of her step-father Creswick's niece."

A letter for Mr. Routh, a delicate, refined-looking letter, sealed with the daintiest of monograms, the thick board-like envelope containing a sheet of paper to match, on which only a few lines are scrawled. But as Stewart Routh reads them, his sinister dark eyes gleam with pleasure and triumph, and his handsome, evil face is deeply flushed.

"Bearer waits." Mr. Routh writes an answer to the letter, short but ardent, if any one had now been there to judge by the expression of his face while he was writing it. He calls his clerk, who takes the letter to "bearer," but that individual has been profiting by the interval to try the beer in a closely adjacent beer-shop, and the letter is laid upon a table in the passage leading to Stewart Routh's rooms, to await his return from the interesting investigation.

Another letter for Mr. Routh, and this time, also, "bearer waits." Waits, too, in the passage, and sees the letter lying on the table, and has plenty of time to read the address

before the experimenting commissionaire returns, has it handed to him, and trudges off with it.

Presently the door at the end of the passage opens, and Routh comes out. "Who brought me a letter just now?" he says to the clerk, and then stops short, and turns to "bearer."

"Oh, it's you, Jim, is it? Take this to Mrs. Routh."

Then Stewart Routh went back to his room, and read again the note to which he had just replied. It was from Harriet, and contained only these words:

"Come home at the first possible moment. A letter from G. D., detained by accident for two days, has just come, and is of the utmost importance. *Let nothing detain you.*"

The joy and triumph in his face had given way to fury; he muttered angry oaths as he tore the note up viciously.

"All the more reason if the worst has come—or is nearer than we thought—that I should strike the decisive blow to-day. She has all but made up her mind—she must make it quite up to-day. This is Tuesday; the Asia sails on Saturday. A letter from Dallas only cannot bring about the final crash: nothing can really happen till he is here. If I have only ordinary luck, we shall be out of harm's way by then."

A little later Stewart Routh made certain changes in his dress, very carefully, and departed from Tokenhouse-yard in a hansom, looking as unlike a man with any cares, business or other kind, upon his mind as any gentleman in all London. "Queen's-gate, Kensington," he said to the driver; and the last words of the letter, daintily sealed, and written on board-like paper, which was in his breast-pocket at that moment, were:

"*I will wait for you in the carriage at Queen's-gate.*"

"I'm glad I see that 'ere letter," said Jim Swain to himself, as, deeply preoccupied by the circumstances of the preceding day, he faced towards Routh's house, "because when I put Mr. Dallas on this here lay, I needn't let out as I spied 'em home. I can 'count for knowin' on the place permiskus." And then, from an intricate recess of his dirty pocket, much complicated with crumbs and fragments of tobacco, Jim pulled out a crumpled scrap of paper. "Teddy wrote it down quite right," he said, and he smoothed out the paper, and transferred it, for safer keeping, to his cap, in which he had deposited the missive with which he was charged.

When Jim Swain arrived at his destination, and the door was opened to him, Harriet was in the hall. She seemed surprised that he had brought her a written answer. She had expected merely a verbal reply, telling her how soon Routh would be home. Jim pulled his cap off hastily, taken by surprise at seeing her, and while he handed her the note, looked at her

with a full renewal of all the compassion for her which had formerly filled his untaught but not untender heart. He guessed rightly that he had brought her something that would pain her. She looked afraid of the note during the moment she held it unopened in her hand; but she did not think only of herself, she did not forget to be kind to him.

"Go down to the kitchen, and cook will give you some dinner, Jim," she said, as she went into the dining-room and shut the door; and the boy obeyed her with an additional sense of hatred and suspicion against Routh at his heart.

"I'm beginning to make it all out now," he thought, as he disposed of his dinner in most unusual silence. "The other one put Routh up to it all, out of spite of some kind. It was a plant of *hers*, it was; and this here good 'un—for she *is* good—is a sufferin' for it all, while he's a carryin' on." Shortly after, Jim Swain took a rueful leave of the friendly cook, and departed by the area gate. Having reached Piccadilly, he stood still for a moment, pondering, and then took a resolution, in pursuance of which he approached the house at which he had made a similar inquiry the day before, and again asked if there was any news of Mr. Felton. "Yes," the servant replied; "a telegram had been received from Paris. The rooms were to be ready on the following day. Mr. Felton and Mr. Dallas were coming by the tidal train."

"I've a mind to go back and tell her," said Jim to himself. "She must want to know for some particular reason, or she wouldn't have sent me to ask yesterday, and she wouldn't have let me catch her out in tellin' a crammer if there warn't somethin' in it. But no," said Jim, sagely, "I won't. I'll wait for Mr. Dallas; there ain't long to wait now."

Jim Swain's resolution had an important consequence, which came about in a very ordinary and trifling way. If the boy had gone back to Routh's house, and had been admitted into the hall, he would have seen a piece of paper lying on the door-mat, on which his quick eyes would instantly have recognised the caligraphic feat of his accomplished friend, Teddy Smith; and he would have regained possession of it. But Jim did not return, and the paper lay there undisturbed for some hours—lay there, indeed, until it was seen by the irreproachable Harris when he went to light the gas, picked up, perused by him, and taken to his mistress, who was sitting in the drawing-room quite unoccupied. She looked up as the servant entered; and when the room was lighted, he saw that she was deadly pale, but took no notice of the paper which he placed on the table beside her. Some time after he had left the room her glance fell upon it, and she stretched out her hand wearily, and took it up, with a vague notion that it was a tax-gatherer's notice. But Harriet Routh, whose nerves had once been proof against horror, dread, suffering, danger, or surprise, started as if

she had been shot when she saw, written upon the paper:

"Mrs. Bembridge, 4, Hollington-square, Brompton."

WHAT IS SENSATIONAL?

THE Right Honourable Mr. Gathorne Hardy, the President of the Poor Law Board, has a grievance. The newspapers have, he says, written "sensationally" upon workhouse mismanagement, and an interest "wholly disproportionate to the circumstances" has been roused in the public mind. Further, lest any public writer should misunderstand his meaning, he is kind enough to particularise the cases to which sensation writing has been applied. These were the condition of the Strand Union workhouse, and the deaths of the paupers Daly and Gibson. It is a noble and instructive sight to look down upon from our snug perch in the House of Commons while this genial remark is made. Opposition and government benches both full; legislators smugly quiet, attentive, and approving; while our orator, who is tediously fluent, well dressed, and self-complacent, pours forth his shameless aspersions against those who have borne disinterested testimony to the truth. Paid by the public to protect the Poor, the official representative of a costly system under which paupers starve and die, can find nothing more germane to the subject of poor law reform than abuse of those who have performed the real work of his department, and but for whom, it and its salaried servants, parasites, and admirers, would have continued with folded hands and brazen front to murmur "all is well."

During the celebrated Chelsea inquiry into Crimean mismanagement, a true humorist and draughtsman, now no more, gave us a sketch of "the witness who ought to have been examined," in the shape of the skeleton of one of the hundreds of horses dead of starvation. But that the heartless perversity which can sneer at human suffering as sensational would not be convinced though one rose from the dead, we might well wish that the two murdered paupers, DALY and GIBSON, could be brought from their graves to bear testimony against their accuser and his accomplices. Mr. Hardy proclaims himself an accessory after the fact by his audacious attack on witnesses not to be suborned, and he is himself criminal in his miserable palliation of crime. "Wholly disproportionate to the circumstances," smiles this Christian statesman, with a propitiatory wave of the hand; while well clad, well fed, clean, comfortable, prosperous legislators smile back assent, and no man says them nay. Yet professional philanthropists, platform orators, great religious lights, men well known at Exeter Hall, and without whose names no charitable subscription-list is complete, can be seen from our point of observation here, placidly beating time to Mr. Hardy's verbose cadences, and murmuring to each other after-

wards that his performance has been very creditable indeed.

The *tu quoque* line of argument is to be deprecated, but the daring of the arch-medocrity below us suggests the question, what would a sensation poor law president be like? Suppose a man to succeed to office when public opinion has insisted upon reform; suppose a prime minister to herald him with a bombastic flourish as "the fittest man in the Queen's dominions" for his onerous charge; suppose the man himself to assure the House of Commons that all previous abuses have been due to the mismanagement and indifference of his predecessor; suppose the same man to purchase the cheap cheers of his fellow-legislators by braggart promises of efficient control and personal sacrifice; and suppose him to conveniently ignore his own statements, and, while filching the labours of others, to throw stones at them from the convenient shelter of parliamentary place—would this be sensational? Suppose the nation to be so outraged by the abuses and cruelties tacitly sanctioned by one notorious department and its officers, that some show of justice and humanity to paupers is found necessary to prolong the life of an unpopular ministry—is the use of charity and decency as political counters, sensational? Suppose a servant of the State to be bold as a lion in his pledges to the public, and as meek as a sucking dove in his performances with guardians; suppose him to be outwardly rigid and privately compromising—is this sensational? Suppose he, or an officer under his direction, to preface public investigations by private interviews with the people accused, wherein friendly hints are given how damaging evidence may be suppressed; suppose him to have other investigations conducted with closed doors, and to cause others again to be so craftily managed that the evidence is published and the verdict resolutely kept back—is this sensational? Suppose a pinchbeck popularity to be earned by the adoption of other men's ideas and a wholesale renunciation of one's own—is this sensational? Suppose underhand relations are endeavoured to be established between a public body and its critics, and sops to be proffered to Cerberus so deftly that a stern front and frowning brow is successfully maintained even while coaxings, fondlings, and tit-bits are being offered—is this sensational? To ally oneself with pitiful intriguers; to purchase hirelings who, having played fetch and carry to one set of masters, are ready to transfer their venal and shameful services to the highest bidder with a cheerful unscrupulousness that such light o' loves only know—is this sensational? Is it sensational to pander, palter, truckle, and deceive; to hush up cruelty and brutality to the helpless, frauds on the ratepayers, and dishonesty to the poor? Is it sensational to bid for political support by throwing the judicial mantle over parochial misdeeds? Is it sensational to make active sympathy with suffering, a matter for punishment; and selfish indifference the key to favour and reward? Is

it sensational to blow hot and cold, to reprove bluffly, and cringe servilely; to degrade a Christian's duty into a charlatan's trick; to abet the oppressor, and use the giant's strength against the oppressed? Which was sensational, the dynasty converting "the negation of God into a system of government," or the statesman who called down the indignation of Europe on its atrocities? Let Mr. Hardy give us benighted public writers information on such points as these.

Sensational writing in the newspapers! Why, the right honourable gentleman is surely contributing sensational writing for to-morrow's issue by the yard. That he and the party of obstruction should eat the leek by meekly appropriating the views and arguments used by their opponents when such measures as the Houseless Poor Act and the Union Chargeability Bill were proposed and carried in their teeth; that the love of place should awaken a sense of justice; that those "carrying the bag" should have been whipped into even a semblance of caring for the poor, is surely sensational enough for common readers. It is as the public defender of the system, and the censor of those public witnesses whose evidence is not hired, rather than as the man responsible for the particular acts alluded to, that Mr. Hardy stands self-accused; and such writers as respect themselves and their vocation are not likely to forget his words. Running with the hare and hunting with the hounds is not always a successful policy, and it is useful to observe how the measure introduced is a practical refutation to the charge made; how every useful clause in it can be directly traced to the influence of independent comment and suggestion; how the tacit admissions of the speaker are damnable to the expensive sham he represents. The flippancy which would propitiate the guardian class at the expense not merely of humanity but honesty, is inexpressibly shocking; and with this before one, the bill itself, useful as many of its provisions are, seems like a bribe thrown half contemptuously to an irritated and long-suffering public, rather than a conscientiously devised remedy for flagrant abuse.

Let us accept Mr. Gathorne Hardy's challenge, and by recapitulating the facts he takes exception to, grope darkly for his definition of the word "sensational." Selecting the workhouse he quotes as an example, what do we find its discipline and internal arrangements to have been? Carpet-beating carried on as a trade among its infirm wards; the dust and flue settling upon the sick and dying, aggravating their sufferings and hastening their end; a broken-down potboy employed as nurse, who trembled from sheer debility when spoken to; patients unable to move in bed without assistance, and help refused them by the guardians in defiance of the entreaties of their own medical officer; the beer, wine, and spirits provided to keep body and soul together, habitually stolen from the wretched patients by pauper wardsmen

and nurses, an emporium for their sale, known as "the Brimstone Hotel," flourishing within the workhouse walls; and a standing proposal to reduce the doctor's salary brought forward whenever he made an effort for reform. These were the proved facts.

The wretched jocularities of human brutes as to mesenteric disease being "something to eat;" the ironical suggestions for "arm-chairs and drawing-rooms for paupers," both occurred at the official inquiry here; and that killing consumptive paupers with carpet-dust has been discontinued, and that the nursing and discipline have been partially amended, is due, not to our Poor Law Board or its officers, but to independent inquiry and the stern comments it evoked. It fortunately happens that since these comments were made, a return from the Poor Law Board to the House of Commons, dated "7th August, 1866," and signed "H. Fleming, Secretary," has been obtained. Let us ask Mr. Hardy, is this a sensational document? Are the following statements by Dr. Rogers, the medical officer of the union which was sympathised with by the responsible head of the Poor Law Board as the object of attacks in the newspapers—are these sensational? Speaking of the Strand Union workhouse, Dr. Rogers writes: "In the first summer following my appointment, an outbreak of fever took place, *owing to excessive overcrowding and deficient accommodation*. . . . The ward then used for the reception of persons admitted on nightly orders, called 'Pug's Hole' by the inmates, was a cellar (without area), and of the most objectionable kind, and the hotbed from which fever was largely propagated. . . . Having repeatedly noticed that the suckling women became consumptive, or suffered from diseases of an exhaustive character, and that many of their children died, I found, on inquiry, that the dietary of the lying-in ward (over which I had then no control, and was not supposed to enter without the request of the master or midwife) was very insufficient, as *it consisted only of gruel for nine days*, and that when discharged to the nursery they went at once on the common diet of the house. . . . In the year 1862, a severe outbreak of fever took place in the building, *due solely to overcrowding*; twenty-five cases occurred in quick succession. . . . On or about this time I suggested to the visiting committee an alteration of the dead-house, the grating, &c., from which opened beneath the windows of the women's infirm wards. . . . From this grating *foul emanations from the dead frequently arose and filled the wards*, and in the summer large blue-flies flew in and out of them from the dead-house. . . . In 1864, overcrowding having again taken place . . . a malignant fever broke out in the house. . . . In May, 1865, the Poor Law Board addressed you (the Strand Union guardians) on the subject of pauper nurses, and strongly advised you to engage paid and responsible persons . . . you, however, engaged one, and by the terms of the ad-

vertisement limited her attendance to those patients only who were in the two sick wards, amounting to about forty persons, and yet the house contained, as you are aware by the weekly returns, four hundred sick, aged, or permanently disabled persons."

"When Belsham, the pauper nurse, was removed at my instance, for robbing the sick, the master, in consequence of a suggestion by me, undertook to bring the question forward, and applied for paid assistance, as the circumstances were such as admitted of no delay. The total refusal, as he informed me, of the visiting committee, and the recommendation of one of the guardians to employ a broken-down potboy whose antecedents he so well knew, was a proof, coupled with what I have above referred to, that it would be a mere waste of time to make any further communication to your board on the subject.

"At the early part of the year 1864, the late Mr. Jeffreys moved that my salary should be increased. I waited upon him, and others who I knew were favourable to me, and urged them to get your board to provide medicines instead, as I wished to establish the principle that in such a large house as the Strand, all the drugs should be found at the cost of the ratepayers, thereby evincing that I had some other feeling in the matter save that of getting a little more money. Your board assented to the proposition, but limited my outlay on this head to 30*l.* only in the year."

Finally, after recounting his efforts to have those abuses remedied, Dr. Rogers's testimony thus concludes: "I have regretted many times, and deeply, that these efforts, instead of receiving the cordial sympathies and assistance of (the guardians), have entailed upon me much annoyance, hostility, and undeserved insult."

Was it sensational, let us ask again, for an inspector from the Poor Law Board to conduct an inquiry into the malpractices of this shameful workhouse, as if he held a brief for the guardians; and to attempt to crush their medical officer as one of the troublesome fellows clamouring for reform?

Passing to published records of the death of the wretched Timothy Daly, let us see what is sensational here. We all know that

The dog, to gain his private ends,
Went mad and bit the man;

and Mr. Hardy would, doubtless, tell us that Daly died obstinately and sensationally for malicious purposes of his own, and with an eye to malicious celebrity. This poor man was found at his lodgings, in want of the common necessities of life; and though he frequently implored the parish doctor to procure him food and nutriment, the latter omitted to do so, on the supposition that Daly's pride would be wounded at receiving them from parochial sources. He had nothing but a little milk and gruel for two or three days, and was so weakened when it was decided to take

him to the workhouse, that stimulants were prescribed. It being nobody's business to give them to him, he had, instead, an aperient, a sedative, and a syrup; and arrived at the Holborn Union workhouse, well physicked, unfed, and half fainting from debility. Here, he had neither food nor medical advice until the next day, but was placed in a hot bath, because a pauper nurse thought him "by no means clean;" he became (not unnaturally) worse in the night, and his condition was pronounced dangerous when the doctor saw him some hours afterwards. Bed-sores supervened, and were not discovered by the doctor until that vague period, "three or four days," had elapsed, so a pauper nurse bestrewed them with fullers'-earth, to the miserable pauper's injury. He was placed on a bed several inches too short for him, and, after some weeks of anguish and neglect, the poor wretch had so strong a conviction that he was being killed by ill-treatment, that he preferred dying of starvation and disease outside, and had himself moved away. Subsequently he was admitted to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he died the day after his admission, of "exhaustion" arising from workhouse bed-sores and neglect.

The circumstances of this death were sensationally held to be a conclusive testimony to the uncertainty and irresponsibility attending the administration of our parochial system; and it was sensationally urged that, although Daly was completely within the circle of that system, he died for want of careful watching and suitable food.

Richard Gibson perished in St. Giles's workhouse, encrusted with corruption and filth, covered with vermin, and without proper nourishment or medical attendance. After protracted suffering, he was mercifully killed off with gin, surreptitiously administered by a drunken pauper nurse. The medical officer had passed the sick man's bed, daily, without asking after his condition, or knowing how his disease progressed, or whether his bed-clothes were foul or clean; and a parochial coffin would have concealed Gibson's sufferings and wrongs without boards, Bumbles, or the public, being the wiser, but for an audacious pauper named Magee, who wrote to the sitting magistrate at Bow-street, and so caused a "sensational" inquiry, sensational reports, and a sensational shock of horror and indignation, wherever men and women—not belonging to the Poor Law Board—could read, and think, and feel.

Let us ask again what does Mr. Gathorne Hardy mean by sensational? Is it sensational to tell the truth? Is it sensational to call public attention to a noteworthy example of a costly board existing under false pretences, and showing mankind how not to do it? Is it sensational to be poor, abject, wretched, dying? Is it sensational in a public officer, when he has nothing to say for his department, meanly to shelter himself under the miserable slang of the hour? Is the commonest humanity, the narrowest charity, sensational? What is Mr. Hardy's opinion of the New Testament? A

sensational performance surely! The good Samaritan? A highly sensational character. The twelve Apostles? What a sensational dozen! Their Divine Master? Inconveniently and notably sensational! There was a time when men symbolically expressed their names in what was called a "rebus." Perhaps the newest sensational effect is for a public servant to do this in a new way, and thus Mr. Hardy sensationally exhibits himself as the most hardy man alive. The House of Commons may be all that Mr. Disraeli says it is, or it may be the different thing that most other men know it to be; but in either case it is surely remarkable that there is no man in it to put a notice on the paper "to ask the Right Honourable the Chief of the Bumbles for his definition of sensational."

PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

PART II. THE OLD PLAYERS.

REMOVING stage and theatres, and the actors and actresses, and the talk about the stage, and the readable books of memoirs, what a blank would be left!

Insensibly the theatre influences us more than we imagine. Our novelists and romancists have a hankering to write their chapters in dramatic form, and your true forcible writer, when he comes to an exciting piece of business, will, if he have any skill, conjure up a stage before him, light up scenery and foot-lights, and see the whole in busy action. Our women dress themselves as for the stage, and for stage effect. Stage talk and stage gossip, proposals for new plays, green-room rumours, critiques, who does not love these things? They have a dim and indescribable charm. Above all stage memoirs, the anything but brief chronicles of the time, make almost fascinating reading. For here garrulity, a vulgar vanity and candour, blend with a dramatic abundance of detail, that give a unique value. Some are good, some bad, some utterly worthless, because written with a genteel affectation and unfaithfulness. But they are curious nevertheless.

Old Cibber's Apology has been put at the head of the list. It is in truth a book apart from the rest, and of almost a philosophical quality. But, to get well behind the scenes and see all the littlenesses of that day, we should take up Mrs. or Miss George Anne Bellamy. A more curious, rambling book: purposeless, dateless, yet full of colour and detail. Execrable English, the language of a housemaid turned into a fine lady by fine clothes and plenty of money.

The works of actor writers would fill many a shelf. We have Chetwoode, perhaps the oldest, Victor, Hitchcock, Edwin, Reynolds, Michael Kelly, Lee Lewes, and many more; but from them stand out two of remarkable merit, admirable, graphic, honest, accurate, and most entertaining—Tate Wilkinson and O'Keefe.

Tate is really a remarkable book, and for perfect *genuineness*, and for power of expressing the turns and workings of the human mind, may be set beside Boswell. Even his unconscious perversions of the truth are transparent, and make the book more honest. It is a series of pictures, and we see Foote and Garrick, lords and ladies, London and Dublin. That this unique book should not have been better known is surprising; but it has grown very scarce.

This was the day of strolling companies. England was divided into theatrical circuits, which the country managers "went" regularly, like the gentlemen of the law. Engaged by one of these, Wilkinson, freed from Mr. Garrick's tyranny, found his way to Portsmouth. His picture of the place is full of drumming and drilling, with the fleet lying out in the roads, and "the gallant Rodney" on shore. It was all drawbridges and lines, and military gates and posts; where the visitor was stopped and questioned. Officers of the navy and army filled the streets. The little theatre of the place was sure to have support from such a constituency.

But the company was a strange and motley one. A Mr. White was *jeune premier*, who lisped, and pronounced Garrick "Gaa-ick;" Moody, newly come from Jamaica; a stout Mrs. Osborne; a Miss Kitty White, whose mamma was the amusement of the profession for her rambling talk and strange blunders. There were crowded houses. The officers were glad to know the droll Wilkinson, and even "the gallant Rodney" was specially courteous to him. One night, when he was playing Hamlet, and Moody, as Gravedigger, was shovelling away, up to his middle, the manager plucked him by the sleeve, and whispered, hurriedly, "Take care; for Mr. Garrick is in the pit!" We may conceive the sensation behind the scenes; every one thinking that the eye of "the London manager" was on him or her. It was near the end of the play; so Wilkinson could not well make out the great actor in the pit, and went home to supper and bed, thinking the whole was a mistake. But next morning came a message from the Fountain Tavern with Mr. Garrick's compliments to Mr. Wilkinson; would he come and breakfast with him? Surprised and overjoyed, the actor hurried away, and was greeted heartily at the Fountain Tavern by his old manager. Nothing could have been more charming or even engaging than Garrick's behaviour. He was out, he told the other, on a little holiday, staying with Doctor Garney, at Wickham, some eight miles off—an old friend to whom this visit had been promised for years. Doctor Garney was a retired physician, who had made his fortune, and was greatly respected in that part of the country.

Mrs. Garrick was there also; and Mr. Garrick said he had been charged by her and the doctor to make Mr. Wilkinson fix his own day, and come out to them. "A visit," added Mr. Garrick, kindly, "which we shall all return." After

breakfast, they went out to walk and see the town, the great Mr. Garrick leaning on Mr. Wilkinson's arm—"an honour I dreamed not of." They went on to the ramparts, saw the dock-yards, and all the time Mr. Garrick was asking about his young friend's prospects, and how he was doing, and congratulated him on being such a favourite. Indeed, it needs not Mr. Wilkinson to tell us that, "whenever Mr. Garrick chose to throw off dignity and acting, and was not surrounded by business to perplex him, he had it in his power to render himself a most pleasing, improving, and delightful companion." It was in such good spirits that he had a bottle of hock made into a cool tankard for luck.

On the appointed day, Wilkinson drove out in a post-chaise to Doctor Garney, dressed in gold lace, like a gentleman. He was received by Garrick, as he says, "like his son." The doctor and his wife were "good" people, and made him welcome. So did Mrs. Garrick. "She was, in truth, a most elegant woman; grace was in her step." Garrick showed him the place, which was charming, "a little paradise," with exquisite views, gardens, conservatories, and a lofty observatory built by the doctor himself. He "ran and skipped like a lad of twenty." He delighted Wilkinson by complimenting him on his dress, merely objecting to the buckles, which were too large for the *mode*, and rather like a sailor's. The actor's heart was rejoiced at being treated "like a man of fashion" at dinner. Garrick spoke of the benefit night, and said to the doctor and his lady that he would take it as an obligation to himself if they would give their patronage to his friend, Mr. Wilkinson. At ten o'clock, after a pleasant game on the bowling-green, Mr. Garrick saw him out to his chaise, gave him some parts to study, and said he hoped there would be no impropriety in bespeaking a play for Friday, July 27; "and we desire, Wilkinson, you will fix on a favourite character, and do your best for the credit of both: and damn it, Tate, Mrs. Garrick expects you will have a dish of tea ready after her jaunt, by way of relaxation" (this was an allusion to his Monologue): "and if you disappoint us, Doctor and Mrs. Garney and all the party will be very angry. So take care!" And thus ended a very happy day for the young actor.

We may conceive the sensation Wilkinson's news produced in the company. But Wilkinson was not to have the lion's share, as he had hoped. There was a sort of *émeute*, each actor being eager to play his favourite and most conspicuous part, so as to catch the eye of the London manager.

Mr. White, the *jeune premier*, very dirty and unshaven about his face, and fond of morning gin, asked, with bitter contempt, "Who is Mr. Gaa-ick? Mr. Gaa-ick has no command over the Portsmouth company. I think Mr. Gaa-ick cannot be displeased with my Macheth, though I want no favour from Mr. Gaa-ick."

All combined against Wilkinson's monopoly,

and the Beggar's Opera was fixed on as giving a fair chance to all. But Mr. Wilkinson was to have his Monologue and the Author, as his share.

All the genteel people of the neighbourhood hearing of the "bespeak," and that Mr. and Mrs. Garrick were coming in, crowded to the little box-office; and when Friday night came round, there was really a full house. The Beggar's Opera began, but the great party had not come. The first act went by, the second began; and the actors and audience began to grow dissatisfied, thinking they had been led there under a false pretence. In particular, Mr. White was scornful and angry, some of the best bits of his Macheath having been played. But, towards the end of the act, the party from Wickham entered, and took their places with the eyes of the whole house on them. It was noticed that Mr. and Mrs. Garrick and party paid the closest attention, and applauded heartily. We may be sure that night was long remembered at the Portsmouth little theatre; and it seems a fresh picture, and its primitiveness and rustic character, coming after the London worldliness, must have been enjoyed by Garrick himself.

After the play, there was supper at the Rainbow Tavern, at which various local persons of distinction came in and paid their compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick. Before them all, Mrs. Garrick very delicately and kindly thanked Wilkinson for his performance. At some time past midnight she retired, having to sleep at the house of one of Doctor Garney's friends, these good people "not hearing" of her staying at a tavern. Mr. Garrick, who, says Wilkinson, "never failed in attention to his lady," would not suffer her to go with the servant, and wrapping himself in a handsome sea-captain's cloak which belonged to Mr. Wilkinson, attended her up the street. When he returned, he said he was quite pleased with his walk, as it had made him acquainted with Mr. Wilkinson's snug roquelaire, which he thought would be exactly the sort of thing for him during the winter months between Southampton-street and the theatre, and save him many a sedan-chair journey. He therefore commissioned Tate to get him one in Portsmouth, and bring it up to London.

It was a very pleasant night. They sat till past three. Great consideration and homage was paid to the illustrious guest, who never showed to such advantage. The whole of this scene does, indeed, exhibit the guest of the good honest Garneys unrestrained, not "stuck up."

Later the actor, wishing to pay a complimentary visit to Doctor Garney, determined to ride out. His description of his adventure is delightfully naïve and graphic:

"I had seldom," he says, "used myself to that mode of travelling; for though I had frequently gone from London to Hampton Court and Richmond, yet it was generally in a post-chaise." The ostler of the Fountain brought to the door a very fine-looking horse,

and asked him if he rode much. The other "assured him the contrary." "Because I beg, then, sir, as you are not a jockey, that I may take those spurs off." He then set off, and for the first mile or so, which was through streets and over drawbridges, "I found it a very delicate matter, either by giving the horse his own way or checking him, to keep him within the power of my art of horsemanship. By degrees, the horse seemed wisely to comprehend that his own self-will and sagacity were superior to his rider's. My ignorance was manifest to the animal, and as he was fully convinced I assumed a government to which I was not by any means competent, he was determined on rebellion, and to himself usurped the reins of power." Having achieved two miles with safety, the horse suddenly set off with fury, throwing his rider into an abject state of alarm, which was increased by finding it a narrow road, and the London waggon lumbering on leisurely in front, "at which," says Mr. Wilkinson, "this dreadful beast rushed, so that the wheel stopped and checked my right leg, and brought me to the ground, and on my fall the horse's hind hoof struck my jaw, and made it bleed most plentifully. Providentially the men stopped the waggon, but almost against their will; for they could not conceive, from the fury of the beast and the supposed misguided rage of the rider, but I was some foolish mad fellow eager to show my horsemanship, neck or nothing." The waggoners were half angry, half amused. "They only damned me for a fool; for they were right sure I *must be mad to ride dumb beast to fright the waggon, like.*" But when Tate explained it was an accident, they laughed heartily, and said "I should never win the King's Plate at Newmarket." Wilkinson was then helped on the horse's back, who had been grazing all this time, and reassumed the reins. "I determined to be very steady, and not venture on the perilous canter any more: a gentle trot at the most was to suffice, and that with all precaution. We were jogging on as if by mutual agreement, when an officer, going on to Hilsa Barracks, came flying by, calling out, 'Your friend Scott dines at Hilsa; do come to dinner, Wilkinson,' and went galloping on. My fiery-footed steed, scorning to be outdone in courtesy, obeyed the summons with the utmost swiftness, while, Gilpin-like, I held by the pommel of the saddle, expecting every instant my neck would be broke. I was at the last gasp with this devil of a horse; for the officer had no thought but I was determined to outride him, and be at Hilsa the first; but on seeing the turnpike, I cried aloud, 'Shut the gate! Murder! murder! For God's sake, shut the gate!' At first they did not comprehend me, but on observing my awkward manner of riding on this my flying horse, and my continued cry of 'Shut the gate,' they did so before I got to it; and then another fear arose, which was, that of the horse's despising the barred gate, and leaping over it. Fortunately the creature, either in pity to my fears or regard for his own limbs, or from the

custom of stopping at the gate (which I cannot pronounce), halted there, and that suddenly, on a supposition, maybe, that the king's duty was necessary to be loyally paid, to which he was possibly daily accustomed, and to my astonishment in the midst of horrors he pleasantly surprised me by so doing, for he seemed equal to any mad exploit whatever."

From the turnpike-man he got a glass of water, and set off again "on the irregular paths of Portsdown;" and here he naturally reckoned the animal had "settled to reason," but on the up hill, down dale, once more he began more swift than ever. "For me to expatiate on the wonders I this day performed in the noble art of vaulting horsemanship might make young Astley fearful of a rival, and dare me to a trial of skill." It ended by horse and rider tumbling down an uneven hill, and rolling over to the bottom. A more humorous description, in which there is quaintness, and naïveté, and perfect candour, cannot be conceived. It makes a very fair specimen of this curious actor's memoir.

O'Keefe's recollections appeared in the year 1826, yet they struck back a marvellous distance. He, too, only cares to tell what he saw, and writes without that pomp of words and affectation which is the blemish of the modern personal memoir. He gives a series of little glimpses of life a hundred years ago, which show us the colours and dresses, as if painted pictures. He saw the days of the old Dublin Theatre, when old Lord Trimblestown was driving about in a superb chariot painted over with "boys in the Flamingo style," the gift of Marshal Saxe. "Drapier's heads" were still the popular sign, swinging over his head as he walked, and an old Captain Debrisay walked about the street "unremarked" in the dress of Charles the Second's day. In London he saw the mob attack the Moorish ambassador's house on suspicion of his having put to death one of his slaves, and beat him and his people all down the Haymarket. He saw Churchill walking about, "a large man of athletic make, dressed in black, with a large black scratch-wig." He was in a coffee-house in St. Martin's-lane one morning when the newsman came in and laid No. 45 of Wilkes's North Briton on the table. Later, standing at Charing-cross, he noted a tall slender figure in a scarlet coat, large bag, and fierce three-cornered hat, carefully picking his way across the street through the mud. That was "Jack Wilkes." But his picture of Ireland in those days makes us sigh and look back wistfully. There were no gipsies, no poor-rates, and no pawnbrokers. The great pride of a countryman on a Sunday was to have three or four waistcoats. The milkmaid sang as she milked; and if the song stopped, the cow began to kick the pail. They all cut each other's turf, and dug each other's potatoes, lending the car or horse. The grand object was to have the half-penny of a Saturday night, the piper's fee, who played for the jig. In Dublin, so eager were the authorities to encourage the linen manu-

facture, that the fees for the yearly carriage licenses were set apart to buy spinning-wheels; and once a year these were set out at the top of St. James's-street, and distributed gratis to every one who came. These were charming times, when "my lord's" or "the squire's" was known as "the big house," and had its fool and running footmen; and O'Keefe often saw these latter skimming along the road in a white jacket, blue silk sash round the waist, black velvet cap and silver tassel, a frill round the neck, and a seven-foot staff, tipped with silver, through whose aid they leaped the ditches. Will those days ever come again for old Ireland?

Curious in their own way are the strange, rambling, vain, and vulgar recollections of Miss George Anne Bellamy, daughter of Lord Tyrawly. The centre of all is, of course, the writer; but this becomes an end and aim to which everything is distorted. Histronic vanity is a special department in the collection of human weaknesses; yet, with this disadvantage, her story is valuable and characteristic from its sheer outspoken vanity, which overcomes every inducement to affectation. We see Garrick in his Dublin town playing at Smock Alley Theatre, and the *recherché* of all *recherchés*; we see "Peg" Woffington in the green-room, and Miss Bellamy and that famous actress "having it out" in a battle royal behind the scenes about their dresses as the Rival Queens. We see how, on benefit nights, the stage was "built up" with an amphitheatre that reached to the flies, so that when the curtain rose there were nearly as many before the foot-lights as behind. Thus the actor, to "come on," had to force his way through a crowd at the wings; and the charming Cibber, dying as Juliet, had a whole crowd of admirers seated on chairs quite close round the tomb. Did an actor drop his hat or glove, a friendly spectator was seen to go forward gravely and hand it to him. There was no end to the conventional absurdities of the stage in the last century. When the hero was near his end, two of the stage servants appeared with a small strip of carpet, which they solemnly laid in the centre so that he might die in comfort. But in the case of an inferior actor, writhing and working in agonies, clawing and tearing at the grand, as was then fashionable, it was found that he had quite wrapped himself up in his strip of carpet. "Gold tickets"—happy days for actors!—were then in vogue, every man of fashion who patronised the stage sending his ten and twenty guineas on benefit night. We see Doctor Young, Mr. Foote (whom we see best of all in Mr. Forster's essay), Sheridan the actor, Quin, "Counsellor Murphy," Doctor Johnson, and a host more. The King of Denmark came to see Jane Shore, and—not so very unnaturally—fell fast asleep. Then the lively Miss Bellamy, putting extra energy into her part, drew up close to his box, and called out, "O thou false lord!" which roused him, and amused the house. She passed through the strangest vicissitudes; now, being

"abducted" at the stage door; now, going to Paris and living sumptuously; now, ending miserably in a debtors' prison.

AN AMERICAN'S WORD FOR AN AMERICAN WRITER.

"N. P. WILLIS is dead!" The fact is announced in the fewest words possible. Still it is something to have one's last illness and death telegraphed across the ocean, when the price of gold is so important.

The question of Doré respecting Tennyson, "Qui est-il donc ce Monsieur Tennyson?" is still more pertinent here to Mr. Willis. He has had scant justice, and no generous appreciation, in England. This has been owing to peculiarities essentially American, presently to be considered.

The golden thread of genius was mixed in the warp and woof of Mr. Willis's nature, though there was other and less worthful material in it. If he had been born and trained in England, he might have emulated Disraeli. He had too much taste, and too little earnestness, for political life in America. He was social, sentimental, convivial. Taste and culture made him what his countrymen called an aristocrat. He loved artistic achievement, therefore he loved England; and the transitional crudeness of his country, where everything was being done, and nothing was finished, was repulsive to the sybaritic side of Mr. Willis.

There is a little poem of his in which he expresses this phase of himself quite as truthfully as poetically and humorously.

A man may love wine, and never be intoxicated. He may love ease and comfort, and forego both for a higher joy, a more worthy rest. Though Mr. Willis wrote "Love in a Cottage," and it was probably a true exposition of feeling, he still lived in and loved his cottage home at Glen Mary in the May-day of his life. He was a practical man as well as a poet, and wrought out for himself two beautiful country homes: the one for his first, the other for his last marriage; and in training flowers and fruits, and growing a landscape for himself and his family and friends, to be copied by his countrymen who had taste enough to profit by the pattern shown, he still carefully made his gates "pig-tight:" a precaution very important where hogs are more intrusive than boys or burglars. But we must not forget the poem,

LOVE IN A COTTAGE.

They may talk of love in a cottage,
And bowers of trellised vine,
Of nature bewitchingly simple,
And milkmaids half divine.
They may talk of the pleasures of sleeping
In the shade of a spreading tree,
And a walk in the fields at morning
By the side of a footstep free.

But give me a sly flirtation
By the light of a chandelier,
With music to play in the pauses,
And nobody very near;
Or a seat on a silken sofa,
With a glass of pure old wine,
And mamma too blind to discover
The small white hand in mine.

Your love in a cottage gets hungry,
Your vine is a nest for flies,
Your milkmaid shocks the graces,
And simplicity talks of pies.
You lie down to your shady slumber,
And wake with a bug in your ear;
And your damsel that walks in the morning
Is shod like a mountaineer.

True love is at home on a carpet,
And mightily likes his ease,
And true love has an eye for a dinner,
And starves beneath shady trees.
His wing is the fan of a lady,
His foot's an invisible thing,
And his arrow is tipped with a jewel,
And shot from a silver string.

His first wife was a most lovely and charming English lady. Of her he wrote to his mother on leaving Europe with his young bride:

Dear mother, when our lips can speak,
When first our tears will let us see,
When I can gaze upon thy cheek,
And thou with thy dear eyes on me,
'Twill be a pastime little sad
To trace what weight Time's heavy fingers
Upon each other's forms have had;
For all may flee, so feeling lingers!
But there's a change, beloved mother,
To stir far deeper thoughts of thine:
I come—but with me comes another
To share the heart once only mine.

Thou on whose thoughts, when sad and lonely,
One star arose in memory's heaven,
Thou who hast watch'd *one* treasure only,
Water'd *one* flower with tears at even,
Room in thy heart! The hearth she left
Is darken'd to lend light to ours.
There are bright flowers of care bereft,
And hearts that languish more than flowers.
She was their light, their very air,
Room in thy heart, mother! place for her in thy prayer.

With such deep love for mother and wife, may not Mr. Willis be forgiven by home-loving Englishmen for some flippant personalities evincing bad taste, and which have been the precedent for many more showing bad manners? Still they are American manners, and hardly to be judged sternly by English standards.

An American discusses everything but a prospective addition to his family, and publishes everything but births. Lords and ladies are abstract wonders that he would like to see, or "hear tell of." "Noblesse oblige" to an imaginative American means that those of noble lineage are obliged to be rich, beautiful in person, and graceful in manner. It takes a pretty large experience to turn this poetry into hard

prose. The literary men and women of England are revered in America with much more than regal reverence. Those who own no saints have more than canonised their favourite novelists and poets. When these grandchildren of England come back where they were not born, and find every man surrounded with a wall of reticence, and villas and gardens with four walls built high and strong, with spikes and broken glass for garnishing, it is very provoking. The American considers English exclusion and seclusion as a very unjust mystery and secrecy. He finds out all he can, and, as own correspondent of some New York or Boston "fast-class" daily or weekly paper, sells his peep-show. The gossiping, curious cousin is tried, judged, and condemned by a code of social laws that he has never been instructed in; and if ever so carefully taught, it is doubtful whether he would see the moral difference between making a paper on London and its celebrities, or giving the pathology of the great West, and particularly of Eden, and the career and characteristics of Jefferson Brick, and "strong-minded" samples of femininity essentially unfeminine.

A true American may be crude, superficial, and impulsive, but he is certain to be frank and warm-hearted. He gives you his hand with his heart in it. He may be hasty and imprudent in forming friendships, and incur censure for fickleness, when he is correcting mistakes that an Englishman would never have made. He sheds tears, kisses, and dollars, on the just and the unjust. It is the American fashion, and he likes it, or he is in too much of a hurry to make changes.

Mr. Willis was accused of offensive personality in his gossiping letters from England. The first excuse for him is that he was American. There is another, that the commercial mind of the English may possibly appreciate. Personal observations of men, women, and things, in England find a ready market and money in America, just as Yankee caricature, wit, humour, and bad spelling, find a market here.

Such flippancy as the following was considered delightful by Mr. Willis's countrymen. Why, then, should he deny himself the pleasure of pleasing them? The scene is a soirée in London, where he sees the lions:

Rejected Smith's, he thought a head quite glorious
And Hook, all button'd up, he took for "Boreas."

He noted Lady Stepney's pretty hand,
And Barry Cornwall's sweet and serious eye,
And saw Moore get down from his chair to stand
While a most royal duke went bowing by;

Saw Savage Landor wanting soap and sand,
Saw Lady Chatterton take snuff and sigh,
Saw graceful Bulwer say "good night" and vanish,
Heard Crofton Croker's brogue, and thought it
Spanish,

And fine Jane Porter, with her cross and feather,
And clever Babbage, with his face of leather;
And there was plump and saucy Mrs. Gore,

And calm old lily-white Joanna Baillie,
And frisky Bowring, London's wisest bore,
And there was "devilish handsome Disraeli."

And yet the poet could be sadly in earnest.
In proof, we quote the poem entitled:

THIRTY-FIVE.

"The years of a man's life are threescore and ten."

Oh, weary heart, thou'rt half way home,
We stand on life's meridian height,
As far from childhood's morning come
As to the grave's forgotten night;
Give youth and hope a parting tear,
Look onward with a placid brow,
Hope promised but to bring us here,
And reason takes the guidance now.
One backward look, the last, the last,
One silent tear, for youth is past.

Who goes with hope and passion back?
Who comes with me and memory on?
Oh, lonely looks the downward track,
Joy's music hush'd, hope's roses gone.
To pleasure and her giddy troupe
Farewell—without a sigh, or tear;
But heart gives way and spirits droop
To think that love must leave us here.
Have we no charm when youth is flown,
Midway to death, left sad and lone?

Yet stay, as 'twere a twilight star
That sends its thread across the wave,
I see a brightening light from far
Steal down a path beyond the grave!
And now, bless God, its golden hue
Comes o'er and lights my shadowy way,
And shows the dear hand clasp'd in mine;
But list what those sweet voices say—

*The better land's in sight,
And by its chastening light,*

*All love from life's midway is driven,
Save hers whose clasped hand will bring thee on to
heaven.*

Still the poet married again, worthily and happily, and other loves bloomed for him after life's first young charm had fled.

His first country home was named Glen Mary, for his English wife. His second was named Idlewild, perhaps by the second wife, who has sweetly contradicted the name by making it an educational home.

In selling Glen Mary, Mr. Willis wrote:

"LETTER TO THE UNKNOWN PURCHASER AND NEXT OCCUPANT OF GLEN MARY."

"Sir. In selling you the dew and sunshine ordained to fall hereafter on this bright spot of earth—the waters on their way to the sparkling brook—the tints mixed for the flowers of that enamelled meadow, and the songs bidden to be sung in coming summers by the feathery builders in Glen Mary—I know not whether to wonder more at the omnipotence of money or at my own impertinent audacity toward nature. How you can buy the right to exclude at will every other creature made in God's image from sitting by this brook, treading on that carpet of flowers, or lying listening to the birds in the shade of these glorious trees—how I can sell it to you—is a mystery not understood by the Indian, and dark, I must say, to me.

"'Lord of the soil' is a title which conveys

your privileges but poorly. You are master of waters flowing at this moment, perhaps in the river of Judea, or floating in clouds over some spicy island of the tropics, bound hither after many changes. There are lilies and violets ordered for you in millions, acres of sunshine in daily instalments, and dew nightly in proportion. There are throats to be tuned with song, and wings to be painted with red and gold, blue and yellow, thousands of them, and all tributary to you. Your corn is ordered to be sheathed in silk and lifted high to the sun. Your grain is to be duly bearded and stemmed. There is perfume distilling for your clover, and juices for your grasses and fruit. Ice will be here for your wine, shade for your refreshment at noon, breezes, showers, and snow-flakes, all in their season, and all "deeded to you for forty dollars the acre." Gods! what a copyhold of property for a fallen world!"

Then he commends brook and bridge, old trees, a portly and venerable toad, a spoilt family of squirrels, a pair of Phœbe birds, and a merry Bob o' Lincoln, and "in the shady depths of a small glen, among the wild flowers and music, the music of the brook bubbling over rocky steps, a spot sacred to love and memory."

This was the grave of an infant daughter, of whom he wrote:

A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,
And by this gate of flowers she pass'd away.

In the American sense Mr. Willis was not an earnest man. He espoused no *ism*. He was a tasteful literary man, with such genius as our quotations show. His heart was given to his family and friends, though he evinced some mild attachment for the union in the time of the war.

Probably the following is what his countrymen would call the most "radical" of all the prose or poetry he has written:

The shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight tide,
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walk'd she, but viewlessly
Walk'd spirits by her side.

Peace charm'd the street beneath her feet,
And honour charm'd the air,
And all astir look'd kind on her,
And call'd her good and fair;
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true,
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo.
But honour'd well are charms to sell,
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair,
A slight girl, lily-pale,
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail.
'Twixt want and scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail;

No mercy now can clear her brow,
For this world's peace to pray;
For as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way.
But the sin, forgiven by Christ in heaven,
By man is curst alway.

The last twenty years of Mr. Willis's life were spent in an earnest fight to keep death from his door. In spite of bleeding lungs and other alarming consumptive symptoms, he succeeded, by living in country air, by horseback exercise, and general hygienic caution and precaution, in keeping alive, and much of the time at work, for the last third part of his threescore years.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE BURDETT RIOTS.

A STRANGER seated in the gallery of the House of Commons, and looking down on the rival benches any night between 1807 and 1835, would have observed, conspicuous in the van of the Liberal party, a tall, thin country gentleman, with a loose blue-tail coat and gilt buttons, a very long buff kerseymere waistcoat, and light-coloured knee-breeches. This gentleman (a fox-hunter, one might almost swear) had a thin angular face, sunken eyes, and a large aquiline aristocratic nose. His complexion was healthy, ruddy, and characteristic of a sanguine temperament. If the stranger were a hunting man, and ever attended the Quorn meets, he would have recognised Sir Francis Burdett, the popular member for Westminster, a fox-hunter who rode straight across country, with rather more pluck than judgment, and who, when astride his favourite hunter, Lempson, Merry once compared to a pair of compasses across a telescope.

Sir Francis, the fourth baronet of an ancient and distinguished Warwickshire family, was born in 1770. Educated at Westminster and Oxford, and making the grand tour, he witnessed the French Revolution. As a thoughtful spectator, he attended the meetings of the National Assembly, and had the good sense to see that amid all the excesses committed by newly liberated slaves and the unfit persons who first directed their actions, a great and beneficial change had taken place. He returned to England in 1793, and married Sophia, youngest daughter of Thomas Coutts, the celebrated banker, who had married his two other daughters to the Marquis of Bute and the Earl of Guildford. Returned to parliament for Boroughbridge in 1796, with Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, the most petrified and Chinese of all the Tories, Burdett early distinguished himself by a chivalrous opposition to whatever was opposed to liberty and the common weal. The brave young squire took to politics with all a fox-hunter's enthusiasm and fervour. He charged the woosack as Melton men charge a bullfinch, and rode at the ministers as a Pytchley highflyer dashes at a five-barred gate. He was courageous and eloquent, his voice clear and shrill as a trumpet. Disdaining office,

not to be bought, undismayed by Pitt's nose in the air or Castlereagh's insolence, he was the bugbear of the Tories, and the incessant object of their bitter, untiring, and virulent hatred. It vexed them to the soul to see an urbane and amiable man of fortune friendly with the democrats of the Crown and Anchor meetings, and incessantly denouncing selfish and mischievous wars, petty oppressions, dangerous tyrannies.

From first to last Sir Francis Burdett advocated the widest toleration. Latterly he did not advance; the advance of public opinion distanced him, but he still loved the flag of his youth, and was foremost in 1822 in trying to heal the wounds of Ireland, and up to 1829 in pressing for Catholic emancipation. Sir Francis, irritatingly courageous, vexatiously good tempered, was not to be crushed by the butt-end of the crop of your parliamentary whipper-in. The Tories could sneer at such popular leaders as Hunt the farmer, Gale Jones the chemist, discontented Lord Cochrane, Preston the lame mechanic, Thistlewood the ruined gambler, and Watson the ex-surgeon of a Greenland whaler; but the rich Warwickshire baronet who had married a fortune, the man of spotless integrity, the authority in constitutional history, the speaker of vehement eloquence, was to be dreaded, and therefore to be hated and persecuted. It was the Tory plan, in the time of Burdett, to treat as a conspirator and Jacobin any man who claimed for the people the right of directing the expenditure of the taxes they themselves paid, who condemned unrighteous, costly, and unjust wars, or who objected to the oppressions of such narrow-minded detectives as Addington, and such coldly cruel men as Castlereagh, whenever they set themselves above the law.

There was not a jail door that closed on an unhappy agitator but Burdett beat at it, demanding justice for the man; no transport left Dover with soldiers sent to perish fruitlessly in a half-starved and unnecessary war, but Burdett denounced the folly and wickedness of those who sent them to perish. To give a list of his exertions is to epitomise the national struggles for liberty and right for full forty years of our history. He denounced the war with revolutionised France. In 1797, he advocated parliamentary reform. In 1798, he condemned the cruel taxation, declaring that the House seemed to meet for the sole purpose of devising ways and means of extracting large sums of money from the poor of England. In the same session, this gallant disciple of Horne Tooke opposed any restraint on the freedom of the press, the press being only dangerous to enemies of freedom. In 1799, he refused his assent to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. In 1800, he resisted the renewal of the Sedition Bill, and the excessive severities practised in Ireland, and resisted a government measure prohibiting clergymen sitting in the House of Commons. In 1802, he supported Mr. Paull in his charge against Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General of India, and annoyed ministers by present-

ing Dr. Parr, whom they detested, to a good Lincolnshire living. In 1809, he condemned the miserable expedition to Flushing, and the small and then insufficient war carrying on in Spain and Portugal. In 1810, he moved for a committee to investigate the acquittal by a court-martial of a Captain Lake, who had been charged with leaving a man to perish on the uninhabited island of Sombbrero.

Could it be wondered at that Sir Francis was a marked man by those whose short-comings and misdoings he so courageously and unceasingly denounced? Lord Sidmouth, of whose order of intellect the old distich is sufficient condemnation—

Pitt is to Addington

What London is to Paddington—

was a great enemy of his larger-minded opponent. Any mean and unworthy advantage was thought fair by ministers in those times of agitation. In 1802, when Burdett was returned for Westminster, after fifteen days' turbulent contest, ministers discovered a flaw in the conduct of the sheriffs, and declared the election void. Returned again in 1806, by an immense majority, Sir Francis fought a duel with Mr. Paull, who had also set up as a candidate, and who had practised some unworthy election tricks. Both combatants were wounded.

If ministers could only catch their untiring opponent napping, or at a moment when his chivalrous impetuosity led him one step beyond the bounds of prudence!—Malice is sleepless. The occasion came. Mr. Gale Jones, the radical chemist, having written a violent article in the papers reflecting on the character and constitution of the House of Commons, and more especially of Mr. Yorke and Mr. Windham, the former gentleman complained of it dolefully to the House as a breach of privilege, contrary to the Bill of Rights, that bill declaring that no member can be questioned out of parliament for any words spoken therein—an obsolete axiom which, if reduced to practice, would render nearly every leader in a daily paper a treasonable matter. On February 21st, 1810, Gale Jones was committed to Newgate by the Speaker, to be detained "during the pleasure of the said House."

Sir Francis instantly thundered and lightened from Piccadilly. In 1809, he had denounced the House of Commons in the House of Commons as one hundred and fifty-seven borough-mongers, who "had traitorously usurped all but the pageantry and outward show and forms of royalty." A man who dared say this dared say anything. In Cobbett's Weekly Register for the 24th of March, Sir Francis published a Ciceronian letter to Burdett's constituents, "denying the power of the House of Commons to imprison the people of England." It bore at its head an inflexible motto from Magna Charta, cap. 39:

"No freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or be disseised of his freedom, or liberties, or free customs, or be outlawed, or exiled, or any

otherwise destroyed; nor will we not pass upon him nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. We will sell to no man, we will not deny or defer to any man either justice or right."

"*Lawful judgment of his peers*"? That was a blow at ministers, who at the smallest caprice were then suspending the Habeas Corpus. "*Defer to any man*"? Evidently a malicious sneer at the wise but not very prompt lord chancellor.

Sir Francis contended, with passionate fervour, that unless this limitless privilege of parliament was at once resisted, it was high time to withdraw all pretensions to those liberties which were won by our forefathers. Was this liberty henceforward to lay at the absolute mercy of a part of our fellow-subjects, collected together by means *which it was not necessary for him to describe*. "Of what avail," he cried, "were right and franchises, if any citizen was liable at any time to be seized and thrown into prison, and without trial and without oath made, at the will of a certain set of persons, beyond whom there was no appeal, and who had the power of prolonging that imprisonment even to the very limits of life. If we abandon the Charta, the bright days of England's glory will set in the night of her disgrace."

As this denunciatory letter was the direct cause of the subsequent riot, it is here necessary to fully enter into the arguments of Sir Francis. The following were his chief syllogisms:

"That proceedings upon bare suggestions were contrary to Magna Charta.

"That Mr. Jones had been called upon to criminate himself, contrary to common sense and every principle and law.

"That the House of Commons had ascertained the facts without evidence, being incapable of administering an oath.

"That they had previously determined the guilt without appealing to any law.

"That they had delivered judgment without trial.

"That they had passed a sentence of indefinite imprisonment contrary to law.

"That the Speaker had issued a warrant of commitment, illegal in the gross and in all its details; no lawful authority, no lawful cause, no lawful conclusion, and, above all, wanting that essential stamp of law—a seal of office."

These logical deductions Sir Francis strengthened by a learned epitome of almost all the claims of privilege ever made, justly or unjustly, by the House of Commons.

In another part of his letter, this bold and generous-hearted man erected another battery of the following incontrovertible syllogisms:

According to Lord Coke, no court that cannot hold plea of debt or damage to the amount of forty shillings is a court of record.

The House of Commons can hold no such plea.

Therefore it is not a court of record, and can neither fine nor imprison.

The letter concluded by quoting some sound remarks, full of vigorous common sense, by that

brave old Whig, Sir Robert Walpole, when Steele (honest Richard) had been brought up for a pamphlet denouncing the Tory ministers of Queen Anne; but Sir Robert said, with the full-blown audacity of his nature:

"Why should the author be answerable in parliament for the things which he writes in his private capacity? And if he be punishable by law, why is he not left to the law? By this mode of proceeding, parliament, which used to be the scourge of evil ministers, is made by ministers the scourge of the subject. The liberty of the press is unrestrained; how then shall a part of the legislature dare to punish that as a crime which is not declared to be so by any law framed by the whole?"

Mr. Sheridan and Sir Francis had in vain moved for the release of Gale Jones, on the plea of his contrition, but only thirteen members voted with them, while one hundred and fifty-three voted against them.

The letter in Cobbett's paper fell on the House of Parliament like a bomb-shell; it seemed all but to blow the Speaker and the wool-sack into the air. To be called borough-mongers, and told the privileges of the House were against Magna Charta, was sacrilege. The greater the truth, the greater the libel, every one knows. Mr. Lethbridge at once brought the letter under the notice of the enraged House. Burdett declared that he never contemplated any breach of privilege; and that he would stand the issue. "He withdrew; and Mr. Lethbridge moved two resolutions, declaring the letter a scandalous libel, and that Sir Francis Burdett, in authorising its publication, had been guilty of a violation of the privileges of the House. After discussion and adjournments, the resolutions were agreed to at half-past seven in the morning of Friday, the 6th of April, 1810; and a vote was taken on the question, whether Sir Francis Burdett should be reprimanded in his place or committed to the Tower. His committal to the Tower was decided on by a majority of thirty-eight in a house of three hundred and forty-two members. The Speaker signed the warrant at half-past eight that spring morning, and ordered its execution before ten o'clock. The serjeant-at-arms, however, was polite, and thought it desirable to give notice to the culprit."

As soon as the division was known, Mr. Jones Burdett and Mr. Roger O'Connor set off in a post-chaise to Wimbledon to inform Sir Francis. The undaunted champion of popular right instantly mounted his horse and rode back to his house in Piccadilly, rather proud of the fight that he had begun. On his high table he found the first missile from the enemy—a quiet letter from Mr. Colman, the serjeant-at-arms, announcing the Speaker's warrant, begging to know when he might wait on Sir Francis, and assuring him that he wished to show the utmost respect. P.S.—If Sir Francis preferred to take his horse and ride alone to the Tower he would meet him there quietly. Days of red axes and butts of Malmsey! here was a way of treating

a traitor to the high court of parliament. Sir Francis instantly wrote, and named twelve o'clock the next day; but about five, before the letter could be despatched, the mild serjeant called in person. The service of the Speaker's warrant was still fixed for twelve the next day. Mr. Colman politely bowed and withdrew.

About seven that evening, Mr. O'Connor went to the Tower to see if all was ready for Sir Francis. Colonel Smith, the governor, assured him that the house next his own had been well aired, and that, from a sense of duty as well as respect, Sir Francis might depend on receiving every attention. About eight o'clock, the serjeant and a messenger called on Sir Francis. The former told him that he had received a severe reprimand for not executing the warrant before and remaining in the house; he therefore hoped Sir Francis would now submit to be his prisoner.

Burdett explained that the serjeant was not to blame, as (without any personal offence to him) he certainly should not have permitted him to remain.

Serjeant: I shall be obliged, sir, to resort to force, as it is my duty to execute the warrant.

Burdett: If you bring an overwhelming force, I must submit; but I dare not, from my allegiance to the king and my respect for his laws, yield a voluntary submission to such a warrant—it is illegal."

The serjeant must leave the house, but could carry a letter to the Speaker containing the resolution as to the warrant taken by (him) Sir Francis. The serjeant begged to decline taking any such letter. He had already incurred blame; if he carried the letter, he should be considered still more criminal. He then withdrew, entirely confused and nonplused.

The letter was sent to the Speaker at ten o'clock that night, by Robert Burdett (a boy of fourteen, the son of Sir Francis) and by the baronet's brother, Mr. Jones Burdett.

The letter denied the power assumed by the House of Commons. The intrepid writer said:

"Power and privilege are not the same thing, and ought not at any time to be confounded together. Privilege is an exemption from power, and was by law secured in the third branch of the legislature in order to protect them, that they might safely protect the people, not to give them power to destroy the people. Your warrant, sir, I believe you know to be illegal. I know it to be so. To superior force I must submit; but I will not, and dare not, incur the danger of continuing voluntarily to make one of any association or set of men who shall assume illegally the whole power of the realm, and who have no more right to take myself or any one of my constituents by force than I or they possess to take any of those who are now guilty of this usurpation; and I would condescend to accept the meanest office that would vacate my seat, being more desirous of getting out of my present association than other men may be desirous of getting profitably into it."

Meanwhile, the storm rose; the mob surged and waved outside No. 80 and all along Piccadilly, from the Haymarket to the gates of the Park. They broke Mr. Percival's and Mr. Lethbridge's windows, and half a dozen other houses were pelted at and much glass was smashed. The humour of the mob was to compel every one who passed down Piccadilly to take off his hat and cry "Burdett for ever!" Woe betide the beaver that did not lift at their imperative bidding! But there was no danger in this; it did small harm to any one, and was beneficial to the hatters.

On Saturday morning, the town being now in a full ferment of anger, curiosity, and alarm, Sir Francis breakfasted with Mr. O'Connor in Maddox-street, and then took a ride in the Park, accompanied by his groom. On his return to No. 80, Sir Francis found a number of his friends assembled, and a messenger of the House waiting with a warrant of arrest in his pocket. Burdett called the man "my good friend," but ordered him to instantly withdraw. He was shown down-stairs by Mr. O'Connor. The man particularly wished Mr. O'Connor to use force and to assault him, but Mr. O'Connor refused to oblige him. The storm grew. Ministers wished to wreak their annoyance on the sympathising mob. Between twelve and one o'clock a troop of Life Guards trotted up, and were drawn in line before the door of No. 80. This was the true way to irritate the mob into violence. More people than usual in Piccadilly—the shouting and pelting at hats and windows could have been prevented by a few police-officers' staves. But the frightened ministers, uncertain on the question, resolved on the most violent and cruel mode of repressing a momentary effervescence. The Life Guards, eager to get to work, and fretting at their own idleness and the contempt and anger of the populace, clanked their steel scabbards and backed their restless horses over the pavement to disperse the mere innocent spectators. The very sight of those plumed helmets, shining breastplates, and sharp drawn swords, was enough to exasperate men. The simplest plan would have been for the serjeant-at-arms to have at once forced the door, served his warrant, and removed his prisoner under escort to the Tower. Burdett was treated like a brigand at bay, and the populace was irritated by the useless display of force. Foot Guards were now planted across Piccadilly, from Dover-street on the one side to Bolton-row on the other, so as to stop all traffic, and keep off the hissing sympathisers. Soon after this, Mr. Read, the magistrate, arrived, and successfully mounting a dragoon horse, read the Riot Act (there being no riot), and warned all people peaceably to depart. The dispersion was brief; in the evening the crowd grew larger than ever, exasperated at the soldiers, uncertain of what was about to happen, and befogged about the whole question. An attempt to send Burdett, the people's man, to the Tower against his wish—so far they saw probable injustice. The soldiers refused to let Mr. Jones Burdett

pass through the line without a constable, but Lord Cochrane (who went into the matter as he went into Basque Roads), Mr. O'Connor, and Mr. Jones Burdett dined with Sir Francis. Indignant at the absurd display of soldiers, who neither defended nor attacked his house, Sir Francis wrote a requisition for protection to the sheriffs of Middlesex. Mr. Wood also applied to the Speaker for advice, but received none. He then stationed a number of peace officers at No. 80, and made the Life Guards remove to some distance on both sides.

That night the people were more turbulent. They shouted "Burdett for ever!" They ordered hats off the heads of all stiff-necked persons. They also called out to householders to illuminate—a request that was tyrannical, but certainly harmless. The moment the candles were stuck up at the panes, the soldiers shouted to the compliant politicians to put out the lights: then with equal alacrity out went the lights. The moment the soldiers had gone by, the mob broke the windows of these trimmers; and in the subsequent scuffle several persons were wounded, but none mortally. The Speaker had bungled, for there was no natural connexion between Sir Francis resisting the jurisdiction of the House and a street riot. It was the soldiers who produced the riot; but for the threatening of death, there would only have been a few hats damaged and a few windows broken.

In the mean time, the cabinet and privy council had met in great puzzle and perturbation. It was the ministers now who seemed to take the initiative, not the House, that had pretended to assert its privileges. It was a Tory ministry eager to catch a Liberal leader on the hip, but uncertain where to strike the blow. The law officers of the crown were consulted. Sir Samuel Romilly, one of the best and largest minded among them, was clear that this was a case that should have been sent to the ordinary tribunals, and that as the matter of Gale Jones had been already concluded, the letter of Burdett could not be said to be censurable as having impeded the proceedings of parliament. On the Sunday, the Speaker (Abbott, "the little man with the big wig," as audacious Jack Fuller once called him) was so irresolute as to what power he possessed for enforcing his warrant, that he sent to the attorney-general, and henceforward acted entirely on his opinion. The frightened ministry, dreading they scarcely knew what, sent orders from the War Office to move up every regiment in the country to within one hundred miles of London.

About one o'clock on Sunday the two sheriffs, Mr. Wood and Mr. Atkins, waited on Sir Francis. Mr. Wood was against the warrant; Mr. Atkins feebly wavered; "the subject," he said, timidly, "was too lofty for his comprehension;" so he gave up all hopes of understanding it. Sir Francis wished to give his only spare bed to Mr. Wood, if he would remain in the house and keep the peace; but Mr. Wood decided no arrest would be attempted before Monday morning; and he would then attend with his

peace-officers. All Sunday the mob continued before No. 80, between the lines of soldiers, shouting and compelling all passengers, whether on foot, or horseback, or in carriages, to pull off their hats on penalty of being pelted with mud. On Saturday and Sunday there called on Sir Francis (besides the serjeant's messenger, who knocked several times in vain) the Earl of Thanet, Lord Folkestone, Lord Cochrane, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Coke of Norfolk, Mr. Wardle, and Major Cartwright. Some of these friends of Burdett were in favour of his now yielding, as enough had been done to constitute a case for a trial of the right; but Sir Francis was of "the old rock," and was inflexible.

On Sunday night the secretary of state had tardily come to the conclusion that force must be used, and promised the serjeant-at-arms assistance. On Monday morning, at ten, the serjeant arrived at No. 80 with a strong body of police, a carriage, and an escort of cavalry and foot-soldiers. Sir Francis had breakfasted in his drawing-room on the first floor with Lady Burdett, the Countess of Guildford, Lady Maria, Lady Jane, Lady Georgina North, Mr. Coutts, his son, his brother, and Mr. O'Connor. Breakfast over, Sir Francis was employed in hearing his son, a boy just come from Eton, read and translate Magna Charta. Burdett's enemies declared afterwards that this was a prearranged tableau—a theatrical, rehearsed, historical picture—but there is no proof Sir Francis apprehended immediate arrest, or that there was anything unusual in a country squire seeing how his boy from school had got on in his Latin.

Just then Mr. O'Connor, looking up, observed a face at the window. A man had mounted by a ladder, had thrown up the sash, and broken two panes in the act of entering. Mr. O'Connor ran to him, but Sir Francis called out not to hurt the man. One push of the ladder, and the intruder would have fallen twenty feet below, on the spikes of the area railings. Burdett, his son, and brother, then pushing the man back, shut all the windows. Looking out, and seeing more troops round the house, Mr. O'Connor ran down to see if all was safe below. On the stairs he met twenty men with constables' staves in their hands. They had descended into the area, burst open a kitchen window, shutters, frame and all, and entered through a small servant's room. They asked if Sir Francis Burdett was at home, and went up into the drawing-room where the baronet and the ladies were. Mr. Colman followed the rough force up, and said:

Sir Francis, you are my prisoner!

Burdett: By whose authority do you act, Mr. Serjeant? By what power, sir, have you broken into my house in violation of the laws of the land?

On Mr. Colman's reading the warrant in great trepidation, as if Sir Francis was about to throw him to the people to be torn to pieces, Burdett refused to voluntarily submit to an unlawful order; Colman said:

"Then, sir, I must call in assistance and force you to yield."

The constables advanced and laid hold of Sir Francis.

Mr. Jones Burdett and Mr. O'Connor instantly stepped up, and each took an arm of the prisoner. The constables closed in on all three, and drew them down-stairs, Sir Francis protesting, in the king's name, against the violation of his person and of his house. "It is superior force only," he said, "that hurries me out of it, and you do it at your peril." The ladies, confident in Burdett's temper, showed no alarm. The baronet, a sergeant, a constable, and Mr. Jones Burdett stepped into the coach. Mr. O'Connor was held back. The cavalry closed round the coach, and the cavalcade swept off at a rapid pace.

The spell was at last broken—the bird was caught—the matter was over. En route for the Tower, two squadrons of the 15th Light Dragoons and two troops of Life Guards, with a magistrate at their head, trotted first; after the coach clattered two more troops of Life Guards and a troop of Dragoons; while there tramped after them, with fixed bayonets, two battalions of Foot Guards in open order, a party of Dragoons bringing up the rear. The Foot Guards, however, wheeled off at the Haymarket, and passed down the Strand towards the Tower.

The cavalcade took a wavy way round, passing across Hanover-square, and round the New-road to Islington, the City-road to Moorfields, Aldgate, and the Minories. The people, not having yet assembled in Piccadilly, were not aware of the capture till the coach and soldiers had got nearly to Conduit-street. Then a shout was raised that ran fast from street to street:

"They have taken him! They have dragged him out of his house!"

The streets were in a moment in an uproar. The human deluge rolled and roared from Charing-cross to the Minories. Round the Tower it soon became impossible for either cart or carriage to pass. Faces grew menacing. There was thunder in the air; for the very thought of oppression invariably maddens Englishmen.

At five minutes before twelve, a moving mass of scarlet appeared on Tower-hill. It was the Foot Guards, three deep, who drew up before the Tower gates, headed by the City marshal and a civil officer. Ten minutes past twelve, an officer of the 15th Light Dragoons came dashing out from Jewry-street by the Trinity House, waving his hand for the people to clear a way. The mob shouted, rolled to and fro, and then ran. Five minutes after, twenty Horse Guards cantered up to the Tower gates; a hundred yards behind rode three hundred Light Dragoons; then came two hundred Horse Guards gleaming with polished steel; and in the midst of them the coach, containing the State prisoner, followed by two hundred more Dragoons. The windows were down, and Sir Francis sat forward at the back on the right, visible to all. There was no resistance, no efforts at rescue. With constables, there would have been no

irritation, but the English blood rose when the Horse Guards slashed the air with their swords to intimidate people who were doing nothing but huzza. The line of steel and scarlet moved in a crescent round Tower-hill, blocked up for half an hour by the vast but by no means threatening crowd. The imbecile delay in the arrest, and the still more foolish menaces, were fast producing mischief. The two squadrons of Dragoons opened right and left, and, clearing the ground in all directions, formed a circle two deep round the entrance. Through this circle of swords the coach and cavalcade passed with no further interruption than shouts of "Burdett for ever!" huzzas for the brave man and hoots for the unnecessary soldiers. A few persons getting inside the palings, pelted the cavalry, who, in return, eager for blood, cut savagely at them with their swords. Some of the mob were driven by the horses into the Tower ditch, but without receiving harm, as the water there, though foul, was quite shallow.

About one o'clock Sir Francis alighted at the gate, and was received by Earl Moira. The gate was immediately shut, and, according to custom, a cannon was fired to announce the reception of a State prisoner. The people were ready to ignite. The rumour ran at once through the town that the Tower guns had been fired on the people. Now, then, at last Mr. Percival would have the pleasure of mowing down a few troublesome opponents.

There is no question about how even a dangerous mob should be treated. First the Riot Act, and advancing lines of constables with staves, then a march of foot-soldiers, without using bayonets; an advance of cavalry, the horses pressing quietly but firmly forward; then, if there be still danger, blank cartridge and the flat sides of swords, but only at the express command of officers, and at intervals; last of all, when lives are in danger, the edge and point of the sword, the bayonet and the bullet, for as short a period as possible. But in this case, a small provocation, about a mere political trifle, these armed men no doubt obeying previous commands, dashed down upon an unarmed multitude, and shot and slashed almost without control, and with all the ferocity of a pitched battle. This was the way such men as Percival and Castlereagh always wreaked their rage at their own blunders.

The mud and stones began to fly; bruising and annoying, but for the most part harmless. Opposite the Trinity House the cavalry ran, sword in hand, upon the multitude, with or without order, and fired their carbines and horse-pistols indiscriminately at the vast and helpless throng. As usual, those who fell were generally old people, women and harmless bystanders. All the way up Fenchurch-street the swords went to work, and the pistols and carbines flashed and carried death. A fellow-ship porter, taking refuge with Mr. Goodeve, a bootmaker in Fenchurch-street, was mortally wounded; a poor old bricklayer, who was doing no harm, was shot through the neck, and died on his way to the hospital. A

man close by dropped, shot in the foot, and another hit in the arm. A sailor in Rood-lane was struck by a bullet in the back of the head, and a corn-meter in the Minories was wounded. At Mark-lane, which was crowded, it being market-day, the balls flew thick and fast round the alarmed corn-merchants. When the soldiers began to turn homeward, Mr. Holdsworth, the City marshal, appeared, and very properly requested the commanding officers to lead the troops back by London-bridge, in order that the peace of the City should be no more disturbed. The request was complied with, and Mr. Holdsworth went before them to preserve order.

At Crutched-friars the uproar grew into a whirlwind. The soldiers had left a wake of bleeding and dying men. A few stones had been replied to by swords and bullets, several boys pelting with mud and bricks, the rear of the Life Guards on which the mob closed, fired, the alarm became wilder, and the soldiers fired incessantly. Two men were shot at Cooper's-row; on Tower-hill and in Gracechurch-street the alarm and confusion was dreadful, the screams and cries maddening. A woman was struck; an unfortunate man, shot in the throat, pleaded for admittance at a spirit-shop, but the door was cruelly bolted against him. The frenzied people, seeing this, broke all the windows, and forced in the door. The cavalry continued to load and fire, as if enjoying the ruthless slaughter, and at the corner of Mark-lane many inoffensive persons were wounded with sabres and pistols. One man had his ear cut off, another was wounded in the breast, a third shot through the wrist. The balls passed through many shop-windows. There is no knowing in these cases how many are killed. Coaches bore off the wounded. Many widows never came forward to complain of the deaths of those dear to them. Many injured persons afterwards died uncomplaining in the obscurity of poverty. No soldier received a mortal wound; it was the poor earthen-pot, as usual, that went to pieces.

In all times of misrule there are, no doubt, cases of lawlessness. Desperate men like Thistlewood were in the crowd. On the Saturday of these unfortunate riots, some such man as Thistlewood tried to pass three of the Coldstream Guards on duty in Piccadilly. One of the soldiers stopped the man with his slant firelock. The gentleman, taking a pistol from his breast, presented it and said, "If you persist in obstructing me, I'll shoot you dead." The soldier persisting, the gentleman fired, and shot the soldier through the neck. The man was removed into an adjoining house by his comrades. The stranger then coolly walked into Hatchett's Coffee-house, followed by a huzzaing mob, and boasted "that he had driven lead into one of the red-coats, and should probably drive some into a few more of them before the affair was over." The same man was seen on Tower-hill on the day of the riot with a case of pistols stuck in the breast of his great-coat; so at least the most truthful of the Tory papers asserted.

The soldiers returned with the empty coach along the Surrey side of the water, and reached

the Horse Guards, after their brief but inglorious campaign, about three o'clock. A regiment from Tilbury had been placed ready at the new Mint. The "strong" but rash government had made great preparations. The Oxford Blues were at the Mews in Charing-cross. The 1st York Militia was at Tower-hill. The Cornwall Militia was quartered on the inhabitants of Kentish-town. The South Gloucester Militia had been ordered from Brighton, as well as the 51st, 52nd, and part of the 95th Rifles. The Coldstream Guards were supplied with ball-cartridge. There were field-pieces in St. James's-square, and the cannon in St. James's Park was loaded with six-pound balls. The Westminster volunteers were assembled at the King's Mews, and the St. Margaret's and St. John's men in Westminster Abbey churchyard, while the Westminster constabulary were collected at the Axe and Gate, in Downing-street. Torrents of rain that night, however, cleared the streets better than shot or sabre.

In the debate in the House, ministers were much blamed for occasioning these riots by their timid delays and irresolution.

On April 17th, about twenty thousand electors met at Westminster, the hustings being erected opposite the King's Arms tavern, when a petition to parliament was signed praying for the release of their representative; Lord Cochrane presented it in spite of Canning's opposition. Petitions from the livery of London and the freeholders of Middlesex were however rejected by the irritated House. In the mean time, popular indignation was vehement against the Life Guards, who were thought to have been brutal and cruel while effecting their retreat through the crowded streets. A long time after they were hooted at whenever they appeared as "Piccadilly Butchers" and "Bloody Backs."

Sir Francis, whose residence at the Tower was one long ovation, went on fighting the House from law court to law court.

"And now the grand difficulty of all had to be dealt with—the question whether parliament should make any appearance at all in the law courts. It was at last decided that the Speaker and the Serjeant-at-Arms should be allowed to plead. The report of the committee appointed to inquire into the privileges of the House was so incorrect that it had to be recommitted. The members had gone out of their beat so far as even to quote the opinion of the Peers as ascertained in a conference. The House refused to receive this opinion, and yet, as it curiously happened, the Lords had, after all, to decide the question of the privileges of the Commons, Burdett's actions being carried before them by writ of error. There seemed to be no end of the perplexities, contradictions, and unmanageable difficulties of the case, as always happens when there is a strain upon the compromises of the constitution. What the House had desired in appointing the committee was that, by means of the materials furnished by the journals, the privilege of parliament should be accurately defined, the questions of its application and applicability remaining, of course, for

consideration in each case as it arose; but, instead of this, the committee quoted the opinion of the Peers, and gave their own indistinct notions of the power of the law courts; and thus their labours did not help on this vexed and still undecided question."

In Easter term, Sir Francis Burdett brought actions against the Speaker, the Serjeant-at-Arms, and Lord Moira, the lieutenant of the Tower. In all of these, as might naturally be supposed where the judges were ministers' men, he was defeated.

On one occasion, Mr. Sheriff Wood and twenty-eight carriages full of the liberty of London went to the Tower to present the thanks of the common hall to Sir Francis. The horses and the servants were decorated with blue ribbons. Soldiers with fixed bayonets were placed to keep the populace from entering the Tower gate. On their return, the mob took the horses out of Mr. Wood's and Mr. Wardle's carriages and drew them back to the Guildhall.

Nearly all the public bodies sent addresses of thanks to Romilly, Lord Erskine, and Mr. Whitbread. There was hardly any gathering of men, however small, says Miss Martineau, in which the privilege question was not argued. Lord Erskine had the honour of meeting the Prince of Wales at dinner one day, when the argument on the subject grew hot between them. Lord Erskine said that the principles he advocated were those which had seated the family of his royal highness on the throne; the prince foolishly retorted that they were principles which would unseat any family from any throne. The affair came to an end by the natural opportunity of the prorogation of parliament on the 21st of June. For some days before, propositions had been made by Burdett's friends for such a triumphal procession as had been seldom seen. Placards on the walls announced the order of the pageantry, and caricatures at the print-shops represented Burdett as the rising sun and John Bull watching him from a bed of roses.

That June daybreak saw the streets crowded from the Tower to Piccadilly. The windows were full, the roofs were close packed. There were scaffoldings and waggons everywhere for spectators. The blue cockades bloomed out by the thousand. Blue flags were borne through the streets, past the sullen Horse Guards, who waited sternly for their revenge. Blue silk pennons fluttered from the windows. At the Tower gates, at two o'clock, three hundred horsemen, friends of Burdett, waited to escort him home. Still Sir Francis did not come. About four o'clock, a soldier on the ramparts put a speaking-trumpet to his mouth, and all the faces on Tower-hill turned towards him. He repeated a few words several times; but those who heard them did not believe him. What he said was, "He's gone by water." No attention was paid to it. Presently one of the constables told the people near him that Burdett had been gone some time, but he was rebuked for saying such a thing, just to get the people to go away. At half-past four three placards were hung out over the gates of the Tower, inscribed:

"Sir Francis Burdett left the Tower by water, at half-past three o'clock."

The committee, at first confounded, resolved to still have the procession, and it was an imposing one. "Gale Jones appeared on the roof of a hackney-coach, haranguing the crowd very actively, but amidst too much noise to be heard. He had been ejected from prison by stratagem, after declaring that he would never go out spontaneously. The crowd was nearly dispersed by ten o'clock, but that in Piccadilly would not go away till the neighbours had illuminated; and soon, nearly all London was shining out at the windows."

Some irritable people were angry at Sir Francis; not because he had resolved not to join a procession, which might have led to riot and loss of life, but because he did not sooner announce his intention, which would only have caused mischief in some other direction. On the 31st, a tremendous public dinner was given to Sir Francis at the Crown and Anchor, and the populace dragged his carriage home afterwards.

The rest of Burdett's career was consistent with the beginning: he was always staunch for liberty and toleration. He resisted the property tax, and fought for reform. In August, 1819, writing bitterly and strongly against the cruel onslaught made by the military at Peterloo, Burdett was tried for libel, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment in the King's Bench, and a fine of two thousand pounds. His final struggles were in favour of Catholic emancipation.

By some historians Sir Francis Burdett's fine character has been stigmatised as sullied by excessive vanity. These writers have surely forgotten that the patriot toils for others, not for himself, and that the greenest leaf in the laurel chaplet that he fights for and finally wears is the applause of his fellow-citizens. Sir Francis never deserted the old flag; but in later life he did not perhaps move as fast as the younger vanguard. There have been many gangs at work on the great railway of human progress. Some wear out, and new men replace them; many begin the labour, and do not live to see it finished. But whatever old abuse there is to cut through, or whatever old ruin is carted off before the line is done, there will never work upon it, be sure, a more chivalrous Englishman than Sir Francis Burdett.

A MODEL IDEA.

My professional duties oblige me to pass some few hours every week at a certain town. Although I had been there often, I had never bestowed more than a look on a large ugly red-brick house, built on a high hill rising immediately behind this town. Of the said rising ground the railway station is the principal feature, but the town proclaims itself as having its own special interest to the neighbourhood, inasmuch as a number of tall chimneys mark it as a factory town.

One forenoon I was looking at this large red

house from a window of the common room in the uncomfortable inn, and was wondering whether the town had grown round the house, or whether the proprietor could have selected so peculiarly uninteresting a spot on which to build. As I looked at it, a voice said:

"Amazingly fine house that, sir!"

I turned, and found I was addressed by a man who had come into the room unobserved by me, and on whose face and person the smoke of the place had produced much the same effect as on the ugly building we were both looking at; but there was something pleasant under his smoky exterior, and I answered, in deference to his admiration: "Yes, it seems a large house. What is the name of its proprietor?" A gleam of pleasure passed over his face at my seeming to take an interest in it, and he repeated, "Ah! 'tis a splendid place that; we used to have pleasure-parties there, we from the factory, when the old squire was alive; but this one, this Henry North, he ain't any of that sort; he knows the inside of his place, and the colour of his money, but he don't care nowise that others should know more of either than he can help. I could tell you a little sort of a tale about that place, sir."

He took off his comforter and great-coat, and in his working factory dress came and sat by me.

That house, sir, was there forty years ago, but not as you see it now; it was then a small white cottage: a pretty little cottage, too, with vines growing up it, and hanging over the eaves of the roof. 'Twas Mr. North lived there, and he had been a factory hand, just as I am; but he was as clever as he was good; and all he did, prospered. When he first bought the little place we thought as he would turn proud to us, but not a bit on it; he used to say that he would deserve to lose all the good things God had given him, if he could render no better account of them than that they made him high to those who had been his friends. Well; he seemed to turn all he touched into gold, and he built factory after factory, until he became so rich that he built that amazing big house. He was a widower then, but his wife had never been one of his sort. She was ashamed to speak to any of us who had known them before they became gentry, and I have often seen a look of pain on his face as she has rode past any of us in her carriage, with a haughty toss of her pretty head. One day he told us he was like to become a father, and he hoped, if his child was spared, he would grow up to do good to those who had been less fortunate than himself.

A few weeks after that, we saw one of the grooms riding furiously away, and in two hours he returned with the most eminent doctor in all Lancashire, but it was too late. A few moments after Mr. North had held his son in his arms, Mr. North was a widower.

The young squire, Master Henry, was a great interest to us, and many a prayer was uttered that he might grow up to be like his father; but his nurses taught him pride before he knew his

letters; if any of us so much as kissed his hand, they would say, "You must not get talking with such people as those, Master Henry," or some such remark.

There's another pretty place just below there, sir. You can see it if you just lean forward and look to the left; that's Mr. Wickham's paper-mill. We believed as Mr. Wickham was making a fortune by it, judging from the way he lived; and he thought it quite a condescension when Mr. North came to build this fine house, and he took to visiting him; but on his death he was found to be so in debt that his goods were seized, and there was a talk of little Miss Mabel being sent to the Orphan Asylum. This, Mr. North said, should never happen to the child as long as he had a roof to cover him. And he took Miss Mabel to be brought up as his own daughter.

She was the sweetest fair-haired little creature as ever I saw, and she has grown up to be as lovely and as innocent as a spring flower. Many's the time we have blessed her as she has gone past our houses, carrying her little basket with chicken, or jelly, or what not, for any of us as was sick. She seemed like any Angel coming among us; and that, not for what she brought, but because of the light and life that seemed to spring forth from her every look and word.

One day she meets me, and she says: "John, I am not happy about my father (she always called him her father); he looks worn and pale, but when I speak of it to him he only smiles, and says, 'There's not much the matter with the old man yet, little one.' And when the smile is gone, the look of pain returns, and he lies back listlessly in his arm-chair, with none of the old energy in his look." As she was speaking, a young man—Jem Wright—came out from a cottage behind us, and, catching the last words, he says: "If he goes from among us, his example ought to remain; for was he not one of ourselves once, and did he not live to be a blessing to all around him!"

"What?" called a voice from the door of the cottage, out of which the young man had come. "Don't speak of blessings to me! Few blessings enough have I ever knowed, and since you took to fooling away all your money on that rubbishy thing that stands in the corner, I ain't got none of the comforts as a poor lone widow woman should expect from her son."

He moved angrily, as if to walk away; but the sight of the lovely figure that was just leaving us seemed to stop him, and he said, more as if he was thinking aloud than speaking to me: "When the minister says in church, 'They shall be like the angels in Heaven,' I wonder if they can be more beautiful than she is." As he was speaking, he turned to his mother, and with a bright smile answered her querulous complaint by saying, "Well, mother, you can't complain, now, of that rubbishy thing as you call it, for, since your illness, I have denied myself the greatest pleasure of my life, and my poor little model has remained untouched."

That model, sir, was Jem Wright's pride; he had lain awake nights thinking of it, until the doctors told him he would grow dazed. He believed that if he could once work out his scheme, it would supersede the present system of locomotion. He had dreams of becoming great, and known to the whole world, if he could only get his model completed. We parted at the door of his cottage, and very soon afterwards Miss Mabel was left twice an orphan. She lost him who had been more than a father to her. Though she was amply provided for in his will, the interest of her life seemed gone. And it was a sad day for us all, when she left the great house, and became the guest of the minister.

The doors of the great house soon became as narrow as the heart of Henry North who lived in it, and were never opened either to rich or poor. He had no feeling for others, no object or interest in life. I have many a time seen him on the East Terrace there, smoking his pipe and leaning over the wall, while his agent, a hard-headed Scotchman, ground down his factory men. He never had a thought to try and advance the interests or relieve the wants of those who had seen him grow up among them, and who loved even him someways, for his father's sake.

Once he had a gentleman come down on business, who, I have heard say, was something of a judge in foreign parts, and he chanced to come to Jem's cottage while he and I was smoking our pipes, to ask the way to the factory. Seeing the little model in the corner, he says: "That's an ingenious toy; what do you call it?" and when Jem, quite pleased, goes on to explain, he answers, in a lecturing sort of a way, "Depend upon it, young man, you can turn your talents to far better use than this. Men must have received an education before they can think of such a thing as making a noise in the world." But he did not know as Jem had more learning than many a gentleman who has been taught at a big school. Jem's father was one of the sort who spend their money at the beer-shop, and he never considered the good of his son, but whenever Jem could earn a few pence, he would pay for schooling. The real first Mr. North hears this, and puts him to the grammar-school, and he soon becomes a member of the Lending Library, and every book he could get hold of he would read half the night. He was so wild after poetry, that during dinner-hour at the factory he would scratch down bits of verse. A gentleman got hold of some, which he sent to the county paper, and soon Jem became what they call a contributor, and his mind seemed to dwell on the thought that some day he might rise. And he would say to me, "And then, John, who knows but that I may be happy, man?"

It was a cold nipping day, with the snow beating in our faces, as I was standing by him, he a saying this, when a carriage dashes past us in the High-street. I knew from the colour in his face that Miss Mabel was in it. He had never told me the secret of his life, but he

known well that I understood it. I was just leaving him, when one of our factory hands touched him on the shoulder, and said, "Hast heard the news, lad? The young squire is going to be married to Miss Mabel." He answered wildly that he was late for his work, and ran from us like one crazed.

I waited till all was quiet in the town, and then I went to his cottage. The door was fastened. I knocked, but got no answer, so I thought he was gone to bed. I returned to my house. I heard from his own lips long afterwards what happened to him that night.

After bearing with the moans of his old mother till she went to bed, he sat over the fire; burying his head in his hands, he gazed into the few flickering embers which alone broke the darkness of the room. The little unfinished model was in its old accustomed corner by his side, and he almost savagely grasped his head as he thought: "What do these miserable brains avail me? I have gloried in having an intellect. I have vainly hoped that, through it, I might break the chains of this poverty by which I am fettered, and which make it an idle dream to aspire to anything beyond daily drudgery. Now, I am alive to the truth, at last, that money can do what intellect is powerless to achieve without it. Why should I be ground down by poverty, while *he*, young North, with his slothful indolence, has all which could make this world a paradise to me?" While he was thus musing, his head sunk lower, and he crouched down over the dying embers, uttering a groan of despair.

He was startled all of a sudden by a voice in his ear, saying: "So, Jem, you think you could order things much better than the Almighty! I offer you a bargain. Will you sign a paper agreeing to give the young squire your intellect, in exchange for his property and money?"

Jem started, and, turning round, saw, peering over his shoulder, to his surprise, the grim face of the Scotch agent, who had never before entered his cottage, except to collect the rent. He answered angrily: "Am I not miserable enough, without your coming to mock me with messages from Henry North, who has all the happiness denied to me, and to which I have vainly aspired?"

Said the agent: "The young squire is the most wretched of beings; all his money cannot procure him what he wants; and he will give you his wealth and all his worldly advantages if you will give him your brains. This is why I am here. Come; sign the paper, and your part is done. Leave the rest to me."

He held the pen to Jem, who, scarce knowing what he does, puts it to the paper, and then sees, in large distinct letters,

JAMES WRIGHT.

A vague horror seemed to creep over him. He had read of a man who sold his shadow to the devil, and who for ever afterwards was a prey to remorse. But then, he argued, "this cannot be the same thing. Here is no compact with

an unseen power. At worst, it is only some trick of the agent's, of which I have suffered myself to be the dupe." Still a weight hung over him. Next morning he dared not go to the factory, but remained brooding at home, and while he was yet thinking what evil might come to him from having put his name to the agent's paper, a letter was brought him. It was from a solicitor's firm which had just started business in the town, and the words seemed to dance before his eyes as he read that Sir John Gore, the great judge, who had once come to his house and noticed his model, had died childless, leaving his whole fortune of ten thousand pounds a year to James Wright, as a mark of the admiration he had conceived for a man who was self-educated.

Jem rushed out of doors, with the letter crumpled in his hand, and found knots of the factory hands earnestly speaking together. One, coming up to him, says: "I see by your manner you have heard the news."

"What news?" says Jem, startled by the idea that his private affairs should be known to many, before he had so much as inquired into the truth of his letter. "What news?" Many voices answered: "Why, the great bank in which the young squire had put his money has broke, and he is ruined."

On he went to the solicitors, more dazed than ever, and there he learned that all was true. He was the possessor of ten thousand pounds a year; the squire was ruined, and had fled no one knew where.

The great house was soon for sale, and Jem, full of the thoughts of the good he would do to all around him, bought it. But with its possession did not come happiness. A weight oppressed his mind. He wandered through the big library, and took down one book after another, but none pleased him. He unpacked his model, but though he now had every tool and every requisite for its completion, his art seemed gone from him. He could not remember the scheme which had ever been working in his mind while he lived in the cottage; and he thought that now, indeed, he was miserable. He wandered through the large deserted rooms, until he came to one he had never before entered. It was small and beautifully fitted up. A bit of unfinished work lay on the table, and by it a book of manuscript poems. His heart beat fast as he recognised page after page of his own verses copied in a hand he knew; for he had one day found part of a letter bearing the initials M. W., and had kept it as a treasure ever since. Now, he found notes on his poems traced by her hand—passages marked, in which he had described her as the hope and guiding-star of his life. He seized his hat and rushed off to the vicarage. "Fool that I am," he thought; "this, then, is why all my wealth fails to make

me happy. She is free. She has a soul to be stirred by lines written by me and inspired by her. I have only to win her, and the happiness I fail to find in riches will come to me through her."

He found her alone in the vicar's little parlour, sketching the mill-stream which ran under the windows of the home of her childhood. She started, and a slight flush tinged her cheek, but he stood by her striving to say something of the faithful representation of a scene so familiar to them both. But words would not come at his bidding, and after a few moments of embarrassed silence he left her to wonder why he was so strange.

He haunted her walks, he followed her wherever she went; but she shunned him. Once more he sought seclusion in his new home, and listlessly took up the county journal to which he had so often contributed. The first thing in it that caught his eye, was a paragraph extolling a wonderful discovery made by a young man named Henry North, about which all the scientific world was raving. As he read on, and recognised in the description, the mechanism of his own model, he shrieked in despair: "It is mine—the model I spent years of my life in making—the object of my wretched existence—and he has robbed me of that too!"

In his agony he sprang out of his chair:—I need not tell you, to find himself just awake, and alone in the darkness of his cottage. The church clock struck three, and he thought: "Can it be that the lesson of a lifetime has been taught me in a sleep of a few hours? The lesson that I have the intellect which God has given me, and that I ought to have the steady energy and quiet patience and purpose to use it?"

He did use it. He left off vapouring about himself and about others, and he went to work with a modest heart though a brave one. He used his energy to good purpose, sir. He is now a well-to-do man, though he has not the great wealth of the young squire; but he lives in the cottage by the paper-mill, and it is more than three years since he brought Miss Mabel home to it as his bride, and they keep their parlour-maid, and she keeps her pony-chair, but they live as simple as though they were nothing more than ourselves.

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